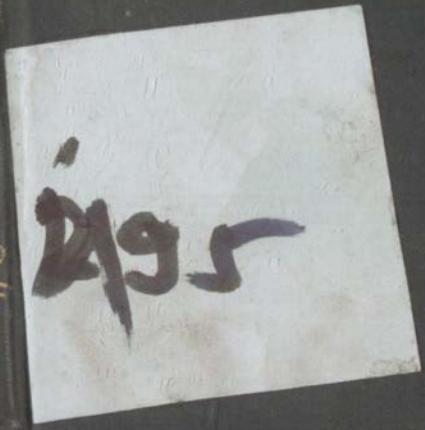

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND REIGN

OF

GEORGE THE FOURTH.

VOL. IV.

LONDON.

THE

HISTORY

OF

THE LIFE AND REIGN

OF

94014
ac.

GEORGE THE FOURTH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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ERRATA.

Page 44. line 17. for "appears," read "appear."
55. line 5. for "Anglesea," read "Anglesey," (passim).
81. line 13. for "Cambroune," read "Cambronne."
113. line 9. for "are turned," read "a returned."
132. line 7. for "excess," read "access."
257. line 8. for "touched, but," read "touched but."
278. line 12. for "could be," read "could not be."

MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE AND REIGN

OF

GEORGE THE FOURTH.

CHAP. XXI.

1814—1815.

TRIUMPHANT counsels, military glory, national exultation, and the sovereign unpopular,—such was the anomalous spectacle presented at the most splendid period of the regent's government. His unpopularity was the result of his conduct and character as an individual, much more than as a sovereign. Personally, rather than politically despotic, he did not, like his father, lie in wait for occasions to grasp prerogative, by stealing upon the liberties of the people; but he disliked truth, he hated independence, he exacted an implicit obedience to his will from all who were dependent upon his pleasure, and he had a spoiled appetite for praise. He was proud of the victories achieved by British valour over a rival, warlike, and victorious nation; but he saw in them only the personal lustre which they

shed upon himself. His was a sentiment which had nothing in common with the national feeling. A subservient tory ministry indulged his worst caprices, and the household party pampered him with flatteries. "Peace, thanks to the prince regent!" was emblazoned as an illumination device on the mansion in Manchester-square; but the indignant sense and better taste of the mob executed summary justice on this outrageous display of adulation and effrontery.

It was contrived by those who had possession of the ear and eye of the regent, that public opinion should reach him only through the corrupt channels and fulsome panegyrics of the court newspapers. The arrival of the allied monarchs first discovered to him the extent of his disgrace with the people. Obliged by the courtesies of hospitality to appear abroad with his guests, and commit himself frankly with the public, he was surprised and shocked by the rude licence of the multitude, and reduced to humiliating expedients for evading manifestations of popular disgust.

Upon the departure of the sovereigns he sheltered and consoled himself within the pomps, privacies, and packed audiences of Carlton House and the Pavilion; but the storm of public disapprobation, whilst it could not reach, only pattered the more violently around him. Englishmen, with little of tinsel gallantry, have a manly and moral sense which more effectually shields the weaker sex, — and nothing tended more to render the regent unpopular than his behaviour to his wife. His separation from her was, under the circumstances, justifiable, perhaps

advisable. But his personal dislike descended to mean persecution. His antipathy and influence closed against her every door, public or private, within his reach. The club at White's had the discreditable complaisance to exclude her from a ball given by the members to the allied sovereigns. A protest was recorded by only three members, of whom Lord Sefton, one of the most high-minded men in Europe, was the first.

Hitherto condemned as a bad husband, he was now further censured as a harsh parent. The princess Charlotte of Wales resided with a separate establishment at Warwick House. In the afternoon of the 12th of July, her father came and announced to her that her separate establishment was broken up; that she must reside under the paternal roof at Carlton House and Cranbourne Lodge; that her attendants were dismissed from that moment; and that a retinue of ladies, appointed by him, was in waiting to attend her. The young princess, with her resolute and impassioned temper, seeing the vanity of resistance or solicitation, obtained permission to retire under pretence of tranquillising her spirits, ran secretly and alone out of Warwick House into the next street, threw herself into a hackney coach, and went to the residence of her mother in Connaught Place. Her mother was not at home to receive her. The archbishop of Canterbury proceeded to Connaught Place, charged with the regent's authority to bring back the young princess. He was refused admission by the servants of the princess of Wales. The duke of York was next despatched upon the same errand. In the meantime the princess of Wales

had arrived and joined her daughter; and after a day and night passed in tears, remonstrances, entreaties, and stipulations against being immured as a state prisoner by her father, the young princess went at last with the duke of York to Carlton House.

The violent proceeding adopted by the regent, and the extremity to which it drove the princess, created an extraordinary sensation. No doubt was or could reasonably be entertained, that the occurrence was an emanation from the domestic quarrel between the prince and princess of Wales. The daughter took part with her mother in the dispute, and, it was understood, saw her clandestinely, in violation of the restrictions of the privy council. It was also said, that the negotiation of a treaty of marriage between the princess Charlotte and the hereditary prince of Orange, so near its conclusion as to be officially announced in Holland, was defeated through the influence of the princess of Wales. Whatever were the motives of the young princess, — whether regard for her mother, whom the prince of Orange was said to have personally slighted, or an attachment to the person who afterwards became her husband, and had come to England in the suite of the allied sovereigns, — one fact was certain, that she rejected the prince of Orange, — thereby provoking the displeasure of her father, and thwarting the measures of his government.

Many circumstances conspired to enlist the public indignation against him. The princess Charlotte united the prepossessions of youth with the reput-

ation of a high spirit and generous disposition, and was, at the moment, understood to be in delicate health. She was regarded as the victim of the regent's hatred of her mother. Rumours were abroad of her being under restraint, and deprived of the means of communication with her friends. Her uncle, the duke of Sussex, was denied access to her. On Tuesday, the 19th of July, that prince put the following questions to the ministers of the crown in the House of Lords:—Whether the princess Charlotte, since she had been brought from Connaught Place to Carlton House, was allowed free communication with her friends personally and by letter? Whether she was or not under the restraints of imprisonment? Whether the physicians had not prescribed her sea-bathing in the preceding, as in the present, year? Whether, now that she was of the full age of sovereignty, it was intended to provide her with a suitable establishment? The meaning of the last question but one was, that she had been deprived of the benefit of sea-bathing when her health required it, lest it might afford her opportunities of communicating more frequently and freely with her mother. Lord Liverpool refused to give any answer, beyond asserting that the prince regent had an absolute right, and the best intentions with respect to his daughter; and that, in the steps taken by him, he consulted only her happiness, dignity, and morals. The lord chancellor Eldon, playing off one of his theatrical accesses of honesty and pathos, declared, "That if the prime minister had answered any one of the royal duke's questions, he would never speak to

him again." The duke of Sussex gave notice of a motion on the subject for that day week; but, when the day came, abandoned his motion, as no longer necessary, because the young princess had been seen on horseback in Windsor Park. It was obvious that the duke's conduct was the result of other influences than so feeble a presumption of her being free from restraint.

The House of Commons volunteered, and the ministers acquiesced in a proposition for raising the income of the princess of Wales to 50,000*l.* a year. This increase of fortune was accepted by the princess and her friends with coy reluctance and clumsy affectation. To the astonishment of the public, and the consternation of the whigs, it was announced, about the end of July, that the princess of Wales had conveyed to lord Liverpool her wish to go abroad. This put to flight the popular illusions about "her attachment to the generous English people," and her unbounded affection for her child. No one was the dupe of her pretence for travelling, that her absence might procure the princess Charlotte more freedom. The public was not only disenchanted of its enthusiasm in her favour, but disgusted with her expending abroad the large income which had been granted to her in contemplation of her residing in England. Her husband and his ministers were delighted to be rid of her on such easy terms; and she sailed very privately from Worthing on the 9th of August.

The eyes of the English people were soon opened to the barrenness of their glory. Their transports of joy subsided to the repose rather of lassitude

than contentment. Peace was restored, but without its expected, perhaps exaggerated, blessings. Ireland presented the usual exception to the rest of the United Kingdom. There the popular mind shared neither the exultation of victory, nor the tranquillity by which it was succeeded. Irish Catholic blood was shed freely in the great contest; and the Irish birth of the general in chief might have flattered the national or provincial vanity of the people; but the Catholics did not raise their chained hands in thanksgiving or triumph; and the duke of Wellington, with an unhappy and habitual dullness to the grace of generous action and emotion, disgusted them by leaving his proxy behind him to continue the civil degradation of thousands of soldiers and officers who had earned for him, with their blood, his fortune, title, and renown. The more intelligent Irish Catholics were influenced by another motive. They saw only the continued rejection of their claims, and confirmation of their bonds, in the great turn of fortune which had placed Europe at the feet of a junta of tyrants, and the ministers of their tyranny.

The state of agitation which prevailed in Ireland was produced by a particular and curious incident. Lord Castlereagh, who mistook tortuousness for ability, and intriguing for statesmanship, instead of emancipating the Catholics by a direct act of justice, or even of policy, concerted with the pope's chief minister, cardinal Gonsalvi, a manœuvre by which emancipation would be bartered for the poor patronage of the Catholic bishoprics in Ireland. Accordingly cardinal Quarantotti, a high functionary

of the papal see, addressed to the Irish Catholics a rescript, authorising and advising what was called the veto. The Catholics denied the authority, and rejected the advice of this rescript with indignant scorn; and, as if to expose the bungling system and bad faith acted upon in the government of Ireland, insubordination to the see of Rome led to a renewal of the war of meetings, proclamations, evasions, and indictments between the Catholics and the castle. Acts of lawless violence and outrage, the natural consequences of inveterate misgovernment and extreme misery, prevailed in some Irish counties, and were met, as usual, by the insurrection act, a penal statute, framed in a spirit of utter recklessness to human liberty, or legal protection.

Parliament was re-assembled on the 6th of November, and, after three weeks' sitting, adjourned to the 9th of February. No act of great permanent importance was passed during this period. A hostile and vindictive allusion to the war with America, in the speech from the throne, provoked animadversion from lords Grenville and Darnley, who ascribed the successes of the Americans on Lake Champlain, and on the high seas, to the inefficiency of the British Admiralty. Peace, however, was concluded at Ghent, on the 24th of December, and after the Americans had in the meantime somewhat retrieved their military character by the defence of New Orleans, definitively ratified by the president of the United States, on the 17th of the following February.

It is necessary to revert for a moment to the

course of public affairs on the Continent. The power and destinies of England, as a European state, were confided wholly to the duke of Wellington and lord Castlereagh. Both were sent abroad on important missions soon after the prorogation of parliament in July;—the duke of Wellington as ambassador extraordinary to the French court, whence he was to observe, as from a centre, the internal movements of France and other countries around him; and lord Castlereagh to assist, as the representative of England, at the general congress to be held at Vienna, for the final settlement of Europe.

The congress of Vienna was opened with inaugural solemnities, spiritual and temporal, on the 2d of October. Its proceedings were profoundly secret, but the new system of Europe, so called, had already begun to develope itself. The French people exercised, under the restored Bourbons, a certain indescribable sort of political liberty, which they owed, not so much to the constitutional charter of Louis XVIII., as to the temporising weakness of his party and government. The measures of the restored king, sanctioned as a matter of course by the majority of a chamber of deputies, which was a mere mockery of national representation, were dexterously calculated to neutralise, by specious limitations and other disingenuous arts, the abstract propositions of the charter, and revive, first the habits and manners, then the political system which preceded the revolution. Even this precarious and imperfect freedom of person, speech, and the press, was scarcely known out of the capital.

Ferdinand VII., on his release by Napoleon, appeared by no means impatient to return to Spain. He waited the restoration of the Bourbons before he left France, and after crossing the Pyrenees, halted for a considerable time at Valencia. This ominous delay excited in the Cortes a vague feeling of alarm and surprise. They, however, could not lightly suspect one whose name was associated with independence and liberty, and for whom so much had been achieved and suffered. He gave the first distant glimpse of his designs by speaking of the Spanish people as his "faithful vassals," in a letter to the regency announcing his release. The regency repudiated this designation, as the state of vassalage no longer existed in constitutional Spain. A deputy, named Reyna, launched, in the Cortes, the opinion that Ferdinand VII. must be received of right as absolute king. The proposition was scouted with indignation by the Cortes, and the utterer ordered to leave the hall and answer for his conduct. Ferdinand still lingered at Valencia. The Cortes addressed to him two letters, earnestly soliciting his acceptance of the constitution, and of the reins of government. His only answer was a proclamation, abolishing the constitution, annulling both the acts and existence of the Cortes, and restoring the ancient despotism, temporal and spiritual, in its integrity and purity. This proclamation was very consistently followed up by a royal warrant for the arrest and imprisonment, as traitors, of the men whose courage and patriotism had the greatest share in his return.

The Cortes and constitution fell without a struggle.

They were taken by surprise. Civil war would have been at the moment a horrible, and perhaps hopeless resource. Spain was sick of strife, and divided by factions. This was not all. Ferdinand had concerted his plan of counter-revolution with Louis XVIII., the most perfidious and prudent of the Bourbons, and his secret cabal; and the Spaniards charge upon the "unwept, unhonoured" memory of the British minister of that day, the crime of having made his country an accessary by treacherous connivance. But there was a radical vice in the Spanish cause. The Spaniards, by a common error, chose for their rallying point a king, and not a principle. Men are perfidious, dastardly, and ungrateful; principles alone are permanently true.

Of the revolutionary growth of princes,—those natural children of royalty,—two survived the fall of Napoleon:—Murat, whose services to the allies were ambiguous, and whose faith was uncertain, retained the throne of Naples by a precarious tenure. The more efficient co-operation of Bernadotte, king elect of Sweden, was purchased and paid by a transaction more odious than any which its authors had ever charged upon Napoleon. The people of Norway were violently wrested from the sovereignty of Denmark, and transferred to that of Sweden, by a despotic foreign will, which could pretend to no right over them whatever. This complicated outrage upon their affections, their aversions, and their rights, drove the Norwegians to desperation and revolt. The crown prince, Christian of Denmark, placed himself at their head. But no reasonable hope remained for a brave and virtuous, but rude

and poor community, disowned by the king of Denmark, denounced by the great confederacy of Europe, and attacked by Bernadotte with the organised and overwhelming military force of Sweden. After a deplorable interlude, under the name of war, prince Christian proved himself unequal to the post of difficulty and danger which he had assumed, and the forced union of Norway with Sweden was consummated.

Lord William Bentinck and his subaltern agents had called upon the Italians, in the name of their country and of independence, to expel the French. National independence has ever been the first wish of the patriots of Italy. *Cacciare i Barbari dall' Italia*, has been their motto from the age of Petrarch and Machiavel. The Italians now hoped that the soil of their country would be guaranteed by British faith and power from being trodden by foreign tyranny. They were soon and grievously undeceived. The arbitrary but enlightened administration of the French was almost immediately succeeded by the barbarian despotism of Austria. The whole of Lombardy, and the states of Venice, were forced under the Austrian yoke. Lord William Bentinck, upon occupying Genoa with British troops, in April, had declared, in the name of England, "the Genoese nation restored to that ancient government under which it enjoyed liberty, prosperity, and independence;" and the old constitution was re-established. In the month of December a protocol from the congress of Vienna announced to "the same Genoese nation" the astounding news that it was incorporated with the con-

tinental territories of the king of Sardinia. An ancient and illustrious state was thus despoiled of its laws, its liberties, its very existence; the public faith of England was violated, and this chiefly through the British minister at the congress. Lord Castlereagh's despatch on the occasion to the commander of the British garrison of Genoa is a characteristic specimen of the shallow cant and sinuous imbecility of style which that flimsy politician passed upon the world for diplomacy.

"I exceedingly regret, as well as do all the ministers, the not being able to preserve to Genoa a separate existence without the risk of weakening the system adopted for Italy, and consequently exposing its safety; but we are persuaded that, by the mode adopted, we have provided much more strongly for the future tranquillity of Genoa, and the prosperity of her commerce. The generous dispositions of the king of Sardinia, whose ardent desire it is to fulfil as much as possible the wishes of the Genoese, will be to them the most certain pledge of their being placed under the protection of a paternal and liberal government. I have no doubt that, under these circumstances, the Genoese of every class will receive this decision as a benefit, and will conform, with pleasure, to arrangements which conciliate their own interests with those of the rest of Europe."

The personal virtues of the king of Saxony had inspired Napoleon with respect and confidence. The French emperor made the aggrandisement of the kingdom of Saxony part of his European system, not so much from any extrinsic relations

of common interest, as from reliance upon the personal fidelity of king Augustus as an ally. He had even thought of choosing a Saxon princess for his wife. The king of Saxony observed his engagements faithfully to the last; but his troops, at the battle of Leipsic, went over, in the hour of battle, and decided the victory. Desertion from the French standard might, in any other troops of Germany, have been pardoned. The Saxons betrayed, not only their military honour, but their country. It might be expected that the useful infamy of their desertion would atone for the obnoxious fidelity of their king, and propitiate the allied sovereigns. But the scutcheon of the king of Saxony was pure. He had neither crouched nor betrayed; and royal probity was a sort of direct reproach which they punished as an offence. He was accordingly sent a prisoner to Berlin, and his kingdom occupied by the troops of the emperor of Russia. This occupation was presumed to be but momentary. It was, however, protracted for several months, until the meeting of the congress of Vienna. The Russian governor of the Saxon capital, prince Repnin, then yielded up his provisional occupation of Saxony to the troops of the king of Prussia; and England was proclaimed a consenting party to this barefaced transaction by the British minister at Vienna.* The king of Saxony published a mournful appeal to the world, in the form of a

* "The king of Saxony," said one of the satellites of lord Castlereagh, in parliament, "*from mere imbecility of intellect*, attached himself to the cause of the Corsican impostor. He,

declaration. He spoke of the justice and magnanimity of the allied sovereigns in such a manner as to suggest the idea of their dishonesty and meanness. "We were compelled," says he, "to depart from our states, and proceed to Berlin. His majesty, the emperor of Russia, nevertheless, made known to us, that our removal from Saxony was dictated only by military interests; and his majesty invited us, at the same time, to repose in him entire confidence." The emperor of Russia was equally ready to invite confidence and to betray it. That "true Greek of the lower empire" yielded to the king of Prussia the spoils of the king of Saxony, in order to secure the aid of a crawling and rapacious compeer in his own designs on Poland.

The fate of the Poles was still pending: but they were obviously marked for Russian prey. The emperor Alexander occupied the grand duchy of Warsaw with his troops; cajoled the Poles with his usual tone of adroit hypocrisy and deceitful promise; and overawed the other great powers, or their representatives, by calling on the Poles to take arms for their independence, and by reinforcing his army on the Polish frontier.*

Whilst this confederacy of the strong against the

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therefore, is unfit and unworthy to reign; and to deprive him of his crown, is an act of simple justice." Quam facile in nosmet legem sancimus iniquam!

* In the following order of the day, addressed to the Polish army, by his gentle brother Constantine, the national and military spirit of the Poles is doubly played upon to cheat them into bondage, and to intimidate the other powers: —

weak was thus pursuing its course of oppression, partition, and spoliation, checked only by the disputes of the confederates respecting the division of the spoil, an unexpected event exploded like an alarm gun through Europe.

Napoleon broke his chain, and took his daring flight from Elba back to France.

A conspiracy was supposed to explode in this memorable adventure. Circumstances, not men, had conspired to produce it. The Bourbons were at

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"His majesty, the emperor Alexander, your powerful protector, calls upon you. Assemble round your standards; let your hands be armed for the defence of your country, for the maintenance of your political existence. While this august monarch is occupied with the happiness which he designs for your country, show that you are ready to support his generous endeavours with your blood. The same chiefs who for these twenty years have led you to the fields of honour, will still show you the way. The emperor knows how to appreciate your valour. Amidst the disasters of an unfortunate war, he has seen that your honour survived events, which it did not depend upon you to alter. Glorious deeds have distinguished you in a conflict, the cause of which was frequently foreign to you. Now that your exertions are dedicated to your country, you will be invincible. Soldiers, and warriors of all descriptions, give the first example of the virtues that must inspire all your countrymen; unlimited devotion to the emperor, whose only object is the good of your country; love towards his august person, obedience, discipline, unanimity; by these you will promote the welfare of your country, which is now under his mighty ægis; by these you will attain that prosperity which others might promise you, but which he alone can procure you. His power and his virtues are the pledges.

"CONSTANTINE."

once dreaded and despised by the great mass of the French nation: dreaded, for their treacherous intention to restore the *régime* of privilege and feudalism, which the revolution had overturned; and despised for their weakness and timidity. The public mind of France was in a state of feverish excitement. There were several distinct parties, with their respective views. Some, chiefly military, sought the return of Napoleon; some, a regency, governing in the name of his son; some, the substitution of the duke of Orleans; and some, the republic. But all, however different their views, were affected with a common nausea, which sought relief in throwing off the reigning Bourbons. Fouché, tormented by his inveterate spirit of intrigue, and piqued by the just scorn of the Bourbons for his proffered services, brought the chiefs of these several parties into a plot to subvert the restored dynasty. He affected, in turn, the opinions and views of each, in his separate conferences with them, but entered only into those of the Jacobins, who were themselves divided between the republic and a regency. If reliance may be placed on the memoirs of Savary, the plot extended to Vienna, and embraced not only Talleyrand, who had already served every government and every faction, in turn, but the Austrian minister, Metternich. The chiefs of this conspiracy were Fouché, duke of Otranto; Maret, duke of Bassano; marshal Davoust, prince of Echmul; Thibaudeau, Boulay de la Meurthe, the two brothers Lallement, and Lefebvre Desnouettes. They had proceeded so far, that a military movement in the department of the north

was organised to take place at the end of February; but all was done without concert or communication with the emperor, as he was called, of Elba. The partisans of Napoleon were the minority in the plot; and even they wished to be in a situation to dictate to him the liberty of France and peace of Europe as the conditions of his return.*

But after, as before, the arrival of Napoleon in Elba, the two ports of the island, Porto Ferrajo and Porto Longone, were freely entered by the vessels of every nation. Strangers landed there without question, coming not only from the ports of Italy, but direct from Toulon and Marseilles. An English man of war, with the British commissioner, Campbell, on board, looked on without interfering. Napoleon had thus the means of learning, from confidential as well as casual visitors, the state of parties in France, and the progress of the allied sovereigns in what they called the settlement of Europe. He was, at the same time, apprised †, by a foreign military officer of high rank, then at Vienna, that Louis XVIII. had succeeded in obtaining, through Talleyrand, a resolution of the congress for transporting him as a prisoner to St. Helena or St. Lucie. Two of the strongest impulses of every strong mind — the desire of power,

* It is necessary to observe here, in justification of this brief version, that most of the English accounts of "the conspiracy of 1815," are but so much romance, founded chiefly on the soi-disant "Posthumous Memoirs of Fouché;" one of the many self-convicting and contemptible fabrications of the Parisian press.

† Memoirs of Savary

and the love of liberty — determined him to tempt once more Fortune, and what he called his star. His resolution was not taken till the beginning of February. Strangers were, from that time, forbidden to land, under pretence of annoyance from their importunate curiosity; and preparations for the expedition were secretly begun. The chief want was that of funds. Loans were obtained from Italian bankers, through his sister Caroline, queen of Naples. He confided his design to her, with severe injunctions that she should not impart it to her husband; and she kept the secret from one whose levity and moral weakness she knew and despised. His sister, the princess Pauline Borghese, blended, with rare art, the fascinations of beauty and the graces with a restless spirit of ambition and enterprise, and a generous devotion to the glory of her brother. She sold her jewels for his use. Napoleon's whole naval means of transport consisted in a brig of war of twenty-six guns, bearing the Elbese flag. There appeared some difficulty in engaging, or danger in trusting, the captain of the brig; the princess Borghese invited herself to breakfast on board his vessel, and, by the magic of her manners and beauty, soon secured his fidelity and zeal. She got rid of the troublesome presence of colonel Campbell, the British commissioner, by another display of the genius of the sex. Aware of the relations of gallantry or sentiment between the colonel and madame Bartoli, a lady of Leghorn, she contrived that an intimation should reach him of the flight of his countess to receive the homage of a rival at Florence. Colonel Campbell

went immediately to Leghorn, where he found madame Bartoli; and was too agreeably surprised to return immediately to his post as commissioner. Tickets were issued for a court ball at the imperial residence of Porto Ferrajo on the 26th of February. The emperor's early retirement from the drawing-room excited some surprise. The princess Borghese explained that it was the imperial usage of the Tuilleries, and did the honours of the evening. Next morning it was found that the emperor had disappeared with his 400 guards, 100 Polish lancers, and about 200 Italian and Corsican adventurers, enrolled as light troops, on board the brig and three vessels accidentally in the harbour, upon which an embargo was laid. The favourable south wind was succeeded by a calm, and daylight overtook the expedition, still between the Elbese coast and Capria. The marine officers would return to Porto Ferrajo; but Napoleon commanded the expedition to proceed. Two French frigates appeared in view. Happily, they did not descry the miniature fleet of Elba. A third vessel of war was coming in the opposite direction. It was a French brig. Napoleon ordered his grenadiers to take off their caps and lie down upon the deck; and the two brigs passed each other after an interchange of civilities, the Elbese brig asking if the other had any commands for Genoa.

At five o'clock in the evening of the 1st of March the illustrious adventurer landed at Cannes, near Frejus; exclaimed, on touching French ground, "Voilà le congrès dissous!" bivouacked on the seashore until the moon had risen; advanced on foot

at the head of his brave little band; was received by the peasants and villagers with enthusiasm; and, making his way rapidly through the mountain passes, approached Grenoble on the fifth day. That city was strongly garrisoned. The commandant, general Marchand, sent out a detachment to oppose him. The soldiers of the garrison, as they came nearer to the vanguard of the advancing column of Elba, strained their eyes to obtain a view of their old chief, and soon recognised his person and grey frock. General Cambronne went forward, attempted a parley, and could not obtain a hearing. The commanding officer, distrusting the force or dispositions of his detachment, fell back. The men retired with lingering steps and reverting eyes. Napoleon gained ground rapidly, and made a second attempt to hold communication with them by sending forward an orderly officer. They would not hear him; and their commander gave the order to make ready as the Elbese column advanced. The men obeyed, — so strong is the mechanical control of military discipline. "Who knows," says Savary, "what would have happened, if Napoleon had not anticipated the perilous monosyllable — "fire," — by walking up to the men with a careless and commanding step, and addressing them in his usual tone, — "Well, how are you all in the fifth regiment?" — "Quite well, sire." — "I am come again to see you. Is there one amongst you who wishes to kill me? Now is his time!" They answered with the old cry of "Vive l'empéreur!" and embraced their Elbese comrades.

Still this was rather a good omen than a material accession of strength. General Marchand ordered the garrison of Grenoble to arms, and the artillery on the ramparts to be charged. The gunners obeyed; but, in charging, put in the shot before the powder*, whilst the gallant and unfortunate Labédoyère, colonel of the seventh regiment of the line, marched out at the head of his corps, with drums beating, and the old eagle colours of the regiment flying, to salute and join the emperor. This first great impulse decided the conduct of the army, and the success of the enterprise. Napoleon presented himself before Grenoble. The gates were closed; but the cry of "Vive l'empéreur!" from without was soon repeated from within; and he was received by the soldiers and citizens with delirious joy.

The startling news had now reached Paris. Louis XVIII. proclaimed Napoleon Bonaparte a "traitor and rebel," and set a price upon his head. Lyons was the next important stage; and Napoleon pushed on by forced marches with the garrison and artillery of Grenoble.

The first intelligence reached the congress of Vienna from lord Burghersh, the British minister at Florence. Prince Metternich announced it at a court ball in a tone of gaiety, with his cheek pale, and his lip quivering. Talleyrand smiled, and did not tremble. It was evident that he was not taken by surprise. His fidelity to the Bourbons was suspected; but the suspicion was erroneous. He thought it a manœuvre of his confederate, Fouché,

to draw Napoleon into an ambuscade, which should cost him his liberty or life.

Louis XVIII., finding the matter grow serious, convoked the chambers, abjured his errors, and made vows of reformation, as the devil did of religion, in his fears. Marshal Soult was removed from the ministry of war, and succeeded by general Clarke, duke of Feltre. The count d'Artois and the duke of Orleans, with marshal Macdonald as major-general, were sent to Lyons. On the morning of the 10th of March an officer of the king's household, waving his hat from the balcony of the Tuilleries, announced that the "brave and beloved princes had attacked and completely routed the traitor and his band;" the two Lallements and Lefebre-Desnouettes, who had marched their regiments from Lille, and attempted to surprise La Fère, were wholly discomfited; and there were no bounds to the effusions of Parisian loyalty and joy. But, in the course of that very day, the victorious princes returned to Paris, with the dismal news that they had the greatest difficulty in saving themselves by flight.

Marshal Ney, who had the command at Besançon, took leave of Louis XVIII. with expressions of blind confidence and brutal zeal. He pledged himself to bring his former sovereign, benefactor, and comrade enclosed, like a wild beast, in an iron cage. Napoleon caused general Bertrand to address a letter to Ney, intimating the certain success of the enterprise, and making him responsible for

the least effusion of blood. Ney, like Murat, with all his intrepidity in the field, had no moral courage, and could not combine two political ideas. He manifested irresolution. General Lecourbe and the noted Bourmont, who were present when he received the letter, advised him to proclaim the emperor. He acted upon their advice; and issued his well known order of the day, which was drawn up, Savary asserts, by Bourmont.

Ney might, and ought to, have personally withdrawn himself; but this was all he could have done for the Bourbons. The troops, already in a ferment, not only would not fire upon their former chief, but were prepared to join him.

On the evening of the 9th, Napoleon presented himself before Lyons, was received with acclamations, and entered the second city of France in triumph; whilst the count d'Artois and the duke of Orleans fled before him with an escort of only a few gendarmes. He halted at Lyons three days, which he passed in reviewing the troops, receiving the public authorities, and performing various acts of sovereignty. Among his exercises of sovereign power were, the abolition of feudal nobility, the dissolution of the two chambers, the announcement of a new and free constitution, the proscription of the Bourbons and Talleyrand, and the abolition, entire and for ever, of the African slave trade.

The news of his progress spread consternation at Vienna. Talleyrand, in dismay, imagined himself already in the clutches of Napoleon, and invoked the emperor of Russia to save his life. The congress of ministers, which affected at first to proceed as if nothing had occurred to disturb or alarm them

now abandoned the work of spoliation: Saxony dropped from the talons of Russia and Prussia; the duke of Wellington, who had taken the place of lord Castlereagh, left Vienna for the British, and marshal Blucher, Berlin, for the Prussian head-quarters, in the Netherlands.

In Paris, the state of interior commotion and outward quiet was such as cannot be conceived by those who did not witness it. Terror and dismay, hope and joy, intrigue and apostacy, hatred and revenge, strove vainly to disguise themselves under masks, the effect of which was exaggeration and distortion rather than concealment. Louis XVIII. repeated his grovelling appeals and hollow promises. His miserable successor, the count d'Artois, pledged himself to the constitution by an oath in the presence of the two chambers. It was too late. Napoleon was already at Fontainbleau. At one o'clock in the morning of the 20th of March, the Bourbons stole out of the Tuilleries; and at seven in the evening of the same day, the emperor (for such he now was, emphatically,) drove into the court-yard of the palace, escorted by a squadron of cavalry, galloping round him in disorderly martial array, with shouts which were soon drowned in the tumultuous cheers of the vast multitude which filled the carousel. The postilions, obstructed by the dense crowd, could not reach the Tuilleries. He opened the chaise door to make his way on foot; but, before he touched the ground, was borne by men's arms to his very cabinet, and in a few hours found himself surrounded by his household officers and ministers of state, as if his reign had never been suspended.

Napoleon's first gradual ascent to a throne, as a successful soldier, favoured by events, was within the common range of example; but to become from a powerful monarch an almost captive exile, under the ban of the confederated world, — to compass against such odds the re-conquest of a great kingdom, and to accomplish this by the electric power of his genius upon the opinions and imaginations of great masses of men, without shedding one drop of their blood, — this is an achievement unparalleled and unique in the known annals of mankind — it is the acme of human glory.

The re-appearance of Napoleon in France, and his resumption of the sceptre, created in England a strong sensation, but not quite equal to the singularity and importance of the event. The period was one of tumultuary discontent throughout the country; and the week in which the intelligence arrived was signalised by the most serious riot which had disturbed the metropolis since the days of lord George Gordon. The owners and occupiers of land complained of ruin, and clamoured for a prohibitory duty upon foreign corn: the consumers of bread were partly alarmed, partly infuriated, at the prospect of high prices and starvation. The ministers, taking part with what is called the landed interest, introduced the memorable corn bill; and for several nights the mob, chiefly of Spitalfields, going forth in organised detachments, intimidated and maltreated the lords and commons on their way to their respective houses, and attacked the residences of several of the most obnoxious supporters of the bill. Under these circumstances, an incident the

most surprising in itself, and compromising the peace of Europe, arrested, rather than diverted, the popular mind.

The effect was stronger upon parliament and the ministry. Henceforth the proceedings of both turned chiefly upon questions of foreign policy, and the prospects of war or peace. Mr. Whitbread, in postponing a motion respecting the congress of Vienna, took occasion to deprecate any interference with the internal affairs of France. Lord Castlereagh replied with his usual ambiguity. The memorable declaration against Napoleon by the congress of Vienna arrived, and, for a moment, seemed to remove all doubts. This manifesto, unexampled in diplomacy, and unexceeded in atrocity, excited in England horror and disgust. The case was simply and shortly as follows: — Napoleon had concluded the treaty of Fontainbleau with the allies, as between independent powers: the full sovereignty of Elba was conceded to him. In violation of the treaty he invaded France; and, upon this violation, the ministers of the several powers assembled in congress took upon themselves to declare him out of the pale of civil and social relations — an object for summary destruction, like the tiger or the wolf. "By breaking," says the declaration, "the convention which established him in the island of Elba, Bonaparte destroys the only legal title upon which his existence depended. The powers *therefore* declare, that Napoleon Bonaparte has placed himself out of the protection of civil and social relations, and, as an enemy, and disturber of the repose of the world, has incurred the penalty of summary

execution." The premise, it will have been observed, assumes that the treaty of Fontainbleau was his only legal title to his life: the conclusion places the declaration of Vienna as a good and sufficient warrant in the hands of the assassin and the murderer; and the savage enthymem was subscribed with the names of four British ministers!*

It is seldom that the essential and sacred principles of morality among men have been outraged with impunity. There is a retributive action, sooner or later, in the moral order of things. Dispensers of summary justice on behalf of the people may one day adopt the logic of the declaration of Vienna, and the victims most probably would be ministers and kings.

A message from the regent to parliament was presented by lords Liverpool and Castlereagh, in their respective places, on the 6th of April. It set forth with insidious moderation, that recent events in France were dangerous to the tranquillity and independence of Europe; that an augmentation of his majesty's sea and land forces became advisable; that the prince regent had entered into communications with his majesty's allies; and that he confidently relied on the support of parliament. An address, echoing the message, was voted in the house of lords unanimously. In the house of commons, Mr. Whitbread moved an amendment, expressly recommending peace. He regarded the address as covertly pledging the house to war. Mr. Ponsonby, on the other hand, construed it as ex-

* Wellington, Clancarty, Cathcart, Stewart.

pressing no pledge. The opposition was thus divided against itself; and Mr. Whitbread's amendment was rejected on a division of 220 to 37. The address, if not a pledge, was a gentle step towards war. A further indication was given by a bill for the continuance of the income tax. On the 22d of May, the approach of war was proclaimed by the following message from the throne:—

"The prince regent, acting in the name and on the behalf of his majesty, thinks it right to inform the house of commons that, in consequence of the events which have occurred in France, in direct contravention of the treaties concluded at Paris, in the course of last year, his royal highness has judged it necessary to enter into engagements with his majesty's allies, for the purpose of forming such a concert as present circumstances indispensably require, and as may prevent the revival of a system which experience has proved to be incompatible with the peace and independence of the nations of Europe.

"The prince regent has directed copies of the treaties which have been concluded to be laid before the house of commons; and he confidently relies on the support of this house in all measures which it may be necessary for him to adopt, in conjunction with his majesty's allies, against the common enemy at this important crisis."

This message was debated on the 23d in the house of lords, on the 25th in the house of commons; and war *ad internecionem* against Napoleon approved, by majorities of 156 to 44 in the former, and 331 to 92 in the latter.

The palm of eloquence on this great occasion

was borne by two speakers, now opposed to each other for the first time,—Mr. Grattan and lord Grey. The speech of Mr. Grattan was gratuitous, antithetical, and passionate*; that of lord Grey logical, deliberative, and wise. Fortune and the event decided in favour of the rhetorician, with a capricious disregard of the informed and informing spirit of the statesman. Lord Grenville, with more consistency than Mr. Grattan, also supported the warlike policy of the administration, and loosened, from that moment, his party connection with lord Grey.

Among the papers communicated with the royal message, were copies of treaties concluded at Vienna on the 25th of March, with the sovereigns of Russia, Prussia, and Austria; a letter from M. Caulincourt, duke of Vicenza, conveying pacific overtures on the part of Napoleon; and a correspondence on the subject between lord Castlereagh and lord Clancarty.

* It may be collected, from the general tenour and some particular passages of this speech, that Mr. Grattan's views were disturbed, and his imagination fired, by the dominant vanity of making against Napoleon a rival oration to one of the most celebrated of Demosthenes against Philip. His speech, however, only proves the caducity of his faculties, and growing depravation of his taste. The following may be cited as an example of jingling antithesis and perverted fact:—"The government of France is war. It is a *stratocracy*; elective, aggressive, and predatory. Her armies live to fight, and fight to live. He (Napoleon) reviewed the troops, and nothing could equal the shouts of the army,—*except the silence of the people.* It was a case in which the army deposed the civil government. It was the march of a military chief *over a conquered people*," &c.

These documents were taken into consideration by the house of commons on the 26th of May. Lord Castlereagh stated the stipulations of the treaties. The first was an English subsidy, not only to the king of Prussia, an habitual military hireling, but to the haughty emperors of Austria and Russia. It was stated by lord Castlereagh, that his majesty's allies would bring into the field, against the common enemy, not the strict contingents of 150,000 men each, as stipulated by the treaty, but 300,000 Austrians, 225,000 Russians, and 236,000 Prussians. England, he said, had the beneficial option of furnishing an equivalent in money for two thirds of her contingent, at the rate of 20*l.* each soldier for the infantry, and 30*l.* for the cavalry; the whole amounting to two millions and a half, to be partitioned as a subsidy among the minor powers, whose contingents of 150,000 for the states of Germany, and 50,000 for Holland, would, with the 50,000 British, constitute an overwhelming force of one million, eleven thousand soldiers.

CHAP. XXII.

1815.

An armed confederacy bringing into the field a million of men, and this vast movement directed professedly against one individual, is a case without parallel. The allies declared themselves at war with Napoleon Bonaparte, and with him alone. Elected, they said, by the French army, he was repudiated by the French people. Upon this theme the British ministers dilated, and Mr. Grattan rang the changes of alliteration and epigram.

Mr. Grattan's confidence was overweening, and the fortune of Napoleon far from desperate. In the first place, the main armies of the allies, when Napoleon re-appeared in France, were remote, incomplete, and disorganised. The Russians were beyond the Niemen; the Prussians beyond the Elbe; the Austrians in Italy or on the Danube; the British for the most part recalled to England, or sent to conclude discreditably a disastrous war in America; and the Rhine occupied only by a weak and scattered force, incapable, not merely of attack, but of resistance. Secondly, the French people, far from repudiating, hailed Napoleon with enthusiasm, and identified themselves with his cause. This point was disposed of by a simple fact, referred to in

the speech of lord Grey:—"Bonaparte," said he, "has invaded France with 600 men; he has traversed that great kingdom from Antibes to Paris, in advance of his troops, escorted by the people, who thronged his path; and, in the full assurance of his popularity, he has just put arms into the hands of the whole male population, between the ages of twenty and sixty."

Napoleon, then, had the advantages of delay, distance, and surprise between him and the enemy, and he had at his disposal the military resources of a generous, powerful, and martial people.

It was the general opinion, when astonishment subsided, and men began to think, that he would halt at Paris merely to recover breath and readjust his crown; then move with his usual rapidity upon the northern frontier, rally the Belgian troops and people under his standard, and signalise the commencement of hostilities by crushing the inefficient miscellany of various nations which constituted the allied force cantoned on the Rhine.*

Napoleon deliberated on the very night of his arrival at the Tuileries, whether he should not adopt this course. The hopes of peace entertained by him and by the French nation; the fear of being supposed to cherish still his views of war and con-

* Sir Henry Hardinge, writing from Brussels, on the 27th of March, says:—"We are not well prepared, either in the number or quality of the troops;" and, after mentioning in detail their motley composition and want of discipline, he adds, "the army is not unlike Lord Rancliffe's description of a French pack of hounds, pointers, poodles, turnspits, all mixed up together, and running in sad confusion."

quest; the advantage of first having the tri-coloured flag hoisted at every point of the empire, prevailed*, and he remained in the capital. It was soon trumpeted for the second or third time through Europe, that his energies and stamina of mind and body were worn.† At this very time he devoted sixteen hours of the four-and-twenty to the labours of the cabinet and the parade-ground.

His first measure was to recast, or rather restore, the administrative and judiciary order, local and supreme. Fouché, it has been observed, was engaged in a conspiracy to overthrow the government of Louis XVIII. The defeated movement of generals Lefebre-Desnouettes, and Lallement in the north, without the slightest concert, though simultaneous with Napoleon's landing in the south, was a partial explosion of this plot; and nothing but the prodigiously rapid march of Napoleon saved Fouché from the guillotine. He made a merit with Napoleon of his share in this intrigue; he was looked upon as the only competent director of the tremendous engine of the police, and he was once more invested with that odious ministry.

Carnot and Fouché might be taken as antagonist representatives of the good and evil principle in the revolution. The former was appointed minister of the interior, and his appointment received as a guarantee of the emperor's intention that France, under the new system, should enjoy real freedom. Napoleon next re-constituted the council of state.

* Mémoires de Napoleon.

† The English ministerial journals announced that he was grown so corpulent as to require the aid of four men to mount his horse.

The first act of this body was to declare the abdication of the preceding year null, on the ground of treason, incompetence, and foreign force. The basis of this declaration was the following maxim, with which it set out:—"The sovereignty resides in the people, the only source of legitimate power." Not content with the declared nullity of his abdication, Napoleon determined upon a new appeal to the national will, and proclaimed the convocation of a *champ de Mai*, or general assembly of the electoral body and deputies of France, to decide by the majority of votes, the question of his re-election to the imperial throne, and the adoption of a new constitution for the security of public liberty.

News arrived at Paris that Louis XVIII. had disbanded his household troops and royalist volunteers, and sought shelter beyond the frontier in despair. But, at the same moment, the declaration of Vienna, circulating through France, damped the public confidence and popular enthusiasm.

The declaration of Vienna was, in every sense, a trial of life or death. Napoleon assumed the task of replying to it with his own pen. The answer drawn up by him was made public as an act of the council of state; but count Boulay, the president, only moulded it into an official form, and softened some expressions which appeared too plain and energetic.* It is valuable as a historic document,

* It was rumoured in the drawing rooms of Paris at the time, that the chief erasure was a personal challenge to the Emperor of Russia. "Individual quarrels," said Napoleon, "are decided only by single combat among brave and honourable men." This idea took such hold of his imagination that

remarkable as a composition, and conclusive as an argument. The non-fulfilment of the treaty of Fontainbleau by the king of France, the designs of the congress against the personal liberty of Napoleon, the attempts made upon his life by the agents of the Bourbons *, the absence of all right to issue against him such a proscription, and, above all, the odious principle of assassination which the declaration authorised, are exposed by him in detail with the abrupt and vigorous rhetoric of his bulletins. He treated the odious manifesto as the work of Talleyrand, and succeeded in rousing and rallying round him the generous indignation of the French people.

The duke of Bourbon and the duke and duchess of Angoulême went upon insurrectionary missions, — the first to La Vendée, the two latter to Bourdeaux, Toulouse, and Marseilles. A colonel of gens d'armes put an end to the mission of the duke of Bourbon, and respectfully escorted him on board an English ship. The duchess of Angoulême was equally unsuccessful at Bourdeaux. Much has been said of the heroism with which she harangued the

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it was conveyed, indirectly through the Moniteur, in a pretended letter from Vienna. "The princess Bagration," says the letter, "who permits herself to say any thing, and who was formerly the greatest enemy of Napoleon, said to the emperor Alexander, at a court ball, 'If this be a personal quarrel between your majesty and Napoleon, why don't you send him a *cartel*, instead of all this noise and bustle of armies.'"

* Talleyrand is implicated; and two persons, Maubreuil and Brulart, the former a ruined reckless spendthrift of high birth, the latter a Chouan, noted for his crimes, and made governor of Corsica for the purpose, are named as being engaged to assassinate him. The charge is corroborated in Lavalette's Memoirs.

troops. The real fact is, that she abused their moderation, and the privilege of her sex, by the fury and ribaldry of her reproaches. The duke, her husband, a poor compound of regal insolence and imbecility, having been defeated in one or two skirmishes, was deserted by his followers, and surrendered himself to general Grouchy. Napoleon was advised to retain him as a hostage, and reminded of the proclamations of Louis XVIII., setting a price upon his head. He had the magnanimity or prudence to reject these suggestions, and sent Grouchy orders to leave the duke of Angoulême at liberty to quit France*, and go where he pleased.

The following statement of Napoleon is confirmed by Fleury, Savary, and Lavalette in their respective memoirs. "A telegraphic despatch was presented, by the duke of Bassano, to Napoleon, in the morning. All passed in half an hour between Napoleon and his minister. It was decided that the capitulation should be executed. Some opposition was manifested in the afternoon, when the news became known. A report of ———, after reminding Napoleon of the hue and cry proclamation against his life (l'ordre de courir sus), stated the reasons for not abandoning so valuable a hostage as the duke of Angoulême. In the evening, whilst doing business with Napoleon, the duke of Bassano submitted to him a second telegraphic despatch, announcing that circumstances had occurred to annul the capitulation. Napoleon asked his minister 'Whether the first despatch was gone?'—'Yes.'—'Whether, before sending it off, he had received the second communication?'—'Yes.' Napoleon approved the conduct of his minister; and, if it were necessary to say why to those who read this, they would be incapable of understanding it. The character of Napoleon would be unknown to them. And the duke of Bassano wanders in exile!!!"—*Mém. de Napoleon.*

Napoleon was reinstated at the Tuileries on the 20th of March. Before the 20th of April the white flag had vanished, and the tri-color reappeared throughout France. This was a natural and easy consequence of the national movement. The great difficulty was to reorganise the military force of France so as to meet a million of foreign bayonets pressing on her frontier. It has been said, that Napoleon, at Paris in 1815, as at Moscow in 1812, was too sanguine in his hopes of peace. "Mon attitude pacifique endormit la nation," says the *Manuscrit de l'Isle d'Elbe*, an imposing, but well known forgery, pretending to be written by him. The following is the substance of his answer to the charge of inactivity, and his statement of what he really performed, as given in the notes dictated by him at St. Helena. "Napoleon, who worked sixteen hours of the four-and-twenty, could not say that he was asleep. Never was more performed in the space of three months. A hundred fortresses were garrisoned and provisioned. The army was recruited and equipped. In March, 1815, France had about 80,000 effective troops; a force barely sufficient for her inland garrisons and naval arsenals. Napoleon thought 800,000 men requisite to combat Europe. He created the necessary *nuclei* of additional battalions of infantry and artillery, and squadrons of cavalry. He made a requisition of 200 battalions of select national guards. He summoned the old soldiers back to their colours; and they cheerfully left their civil occupations to put on the old uniform. The conscription of 1815 was called out, and would produce 140,000 men. A

vote of 250,000 men would be proposed to the chamber in July, and the levy would have been completed in September. Fire-arms were fabricated at a rate each month exceeding the usual rate in six months. The manufactures of military clothing were wholly unprovided and decayed; and the troops, with the exception of a few favoured regiments, were naked. He re-established those factories, and clothed the soldiers. The public service was supplied, not merely with ready money, but by large advances to the contractors. At the same time the state pensioners were paid with exactness. France, at the end of September, would have between 800,000 and 900,000 men organised, armed, and equipped. The problem of her independence consisted in warding off hostilities till that time. The empire would then present a brazen frontier which no human power could pass with impunity. On the 1st of June, France had 559,000 effective men under arms, and of these 217,000 were ready to take the field. But, in spite of the utmost activity, the contest might begin before autumn; the combined armies of Europe would greatly outnumber those of France, and, in that case, the destinies of the empire would be decided under the walls of Lyons and the capital. Napoleon had frequently thought of fortifying Paris; more particularly after the campaign of Austerlitz. The fear of alarming the Parisians, and the rapid succession of events, prevented the execution of this project. He thought that a great capital is the country of the *élite* of the nation, the centre of opinion, the universal depôt; and that therefore it was the most glaring

contradiction to leave a point so important unfortified. Fifty thousand national guards, and two or three thousand artillery men, will defend a city against 300,000 men; but would be put to flight in open ground by a few thousand cavalry. States often want soldiers, men never, for interior defence. Napoleon accordingly charged the generals of engineers, Haxo and Lery, with the fortification of Paris and Lyons. It is not whilst asleep that a nation places one fiftieth of her population under arms in a month. What, then, would she do awake?"

His obvious aim and interest were, if peace could not be obtained, to delay hostilities. He accordingly employed every resource of formal and secret negotiation. He made an overture to the British government, which was referred, by lord Castlereagh, to lord Clancarty, at Vienna. He addressed a letter to the emperor of Austria, who submitted it to the other sovereigns. Neither communication was replied to. One of the known satellites of Talleyrand was selected at Paris, and sent off to Vienna with offers of forgiveness, favour, and a bribe. "You are fooled, or you would fool me," said Talleyrand; believing, perhaps, that it was not in human nature to pardon his treason and ingratitude.*

Napoleon proclaimed, on his arrival at Paris, that the coronation of the empress and king of Rome should form part of the business of the *champ de Mai.* The declaration of Vienna made it apparent

* Campagne des Cent Jours. Mémoires du duc de Rovigo.

that the emperor of Austria would not consent to the return of his daughter and grandson. They were, in effect, state prisoners at the palace of Schoenbrun. A plan concerted for their escape, and its discovery by the Austrian police, became the news of Europe for a day.

The conduct of a wife whose hand has been bartered for considerations in which she has no part, should be indulgently judged. Napoleon, however, shared with the Austrian archduchess glory and a throne; he treated her with the utmost personal kindness; and, it was said, gained her affection. She got credit for soliciting permission from the congress to join him in Elba, and for entering eagerly into this plot for her escape to France. The world was grossly deceived, or, more properly, in this as in other instances where the ruling caste is concerned, grossly deceived itself. A letter from Vienna, written by a Frenchman in the service of the empress, was delivered by a courier to Lavalette. The letter bore no address; but the courier stated, from verbal instructions, who had written it, and for whom it was intended. Lavalette placed it unopened in the hands of Napoleon. The contents disclosed to him that he must no longer count on the empress; that she spoke of him in terms of fear and hatred; and that she had utterly abandoned herself to the man who was appointed her chief jailor. The letter was without either address or signature, and doubts were suggested of its authenticity by Napoleon. It was submitted to Caulincourt, who was well acquainted with the alleged writer's hand, and pronounced by

him authentic. Napoleon retired to his private cabinet; the wrongs of Josephine were avenged by the pangs which he must, at that moment, have endured. He had the social and softer feelings. Without them he could not possess the boundless devotion of his first wife, and the affection of her family and of his own. Without the sentiment of friendship he could not possess and prove so many friends. He must have felt, in this recoil, with the utmost bitterness of disappointment and remorse, that there are human obligations too sacred, and human feelings too precious to be sacrificed at the shrine of politics and power; and that ambition itself may be best promoted, as it is best enjoyed, by a partnership of the heart. Had the emperor never discarded her who linked her fortune and her fate with the young officer of artillery who had "nothing but his sword *," he would probably have died on the throne of France, and not upon the rock of St. Helena.

The object of Maria Louisa's infatuated passion was not formed, according to common notions, to captivate a princess;—he was destitute of the graces of person and mind. His face was whimsi-

* Whilst his *marriage* with Madame Beauharnois was pending, he escorted her, one day, to the residence of her notary. The lady and the notary went into another room, and the man of business strongly advised her not to marry a young officer, "with nothing but his sword." Napoleon, the day after he had placed on the head of Josephine an imperial crown, commanded the attendance of the notary, and abruptly addressed him, "Well, M. ———, have I nothing but my sword now?"

cally mutilated. All that remained of one eye was the dim disfigured socket. She afterwards satisfied her scruples, or sanctified her shame, by that religious mockery of the German courts, — a marriage with the left hand. Count Niepperg died some time since, leaving several children by the ex-empress, who are acknowledged, and bear imperial titles.

Pending the military preparations and political negotiations and intrigues of Napoleon, the allies were employed in the same way, with less activity, but with more success. A military conference was substituted for the congress at Vienna, to determine the plan of the campaign. The first meeting, held on the 31st of May, in the presence of the emperor of Russia, by the princes Schwartzenberg, Wrede, and Wolkonski, lord Cathcart, and general Knesebeck, military representatives of Austria, Bavaria, Russia, England, and Prussia, resolved as a basis that three grand armies should be formed on the lower and upper Rhine, under the orders of Wellington, Blucher, and Schwartzenberg. Prince Schwartzenberg, general Knesebeck, and the duke of Wellington, severally submitted their views in writing to the conference.* The memorial of prince Schwartzenberg is dated Vienna, April 20th. "It would be dnngerous," says he, "to indulge flattering illusions. The time which might prove favourable to a project of invasion is gone by; the armies of the allies being in general too remote from the frontiers of France. The means of resistance of the French are numerous," &c. He calculates, however, that the

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

enemy could not oppose 400,000 men to the 800,000 which would be moved against France. After laying down certain general principles, and the respective bases of operation, or rather co-operation, of the several allied armies, he adds,—"It is only thus that one of our armies, if beaten, would gain time to recover itself; and that even in case of a second reverse, the enemy would at last sink under continued effort."

The memoir of general Knesebeck, more elaborate than that of Schwartzenberg, has more of conceit, common-place, and military pedantry. The following is an example, and conveys the substance of his plan:—"Should it be decided to undertake nothing for the present, but to wait until France may be entered in force on all sides, the following appears to be the fundamental lines of such an operation. To beat the armies of Bonaparte; to deliver the French nation from the yoke under which it groans;—such is the object of the war. To fall upon the Bonapartean army with all possible force; then to direct the movements of the different allied armies in such a manner as that no one of them should be overpowered singly; but on the contrary, that several armies should be together, and, if possible, united on the day of a general battle;—such is the mode of attaining this end. It results from this consideration that if, to put down Bonaparte, Paris should be from the beginning the object of the allied armies, all should be in the same line before a combined movement upon that capital is begun." He then proceeds to advise in detail the positions which the several armies should

take, and discovers to the duke of Wellington "that Antwerp should be to him in Holland what Lisbon was in Portugal!"

It is obvious from these papers that the allies proposed to act only upon the defensive, until the whole force of the confederacy, including the Russians, were in line upon the frontier, and that they took their measures with a reference, in the first onset, to the hazards of defeat.

The duke of Wellington conveyed his opinion from Brussels in a private letter, which was submitted to the conference, and appears to have been addressed either to lord Cathcart, or lord Stewart.* It bears no date; but from internal evidence must have been written about the middle of May. "In respect to the period of commencing operations," says the duke, "I had adopted the opinion that it was necessary to wait for more troops, so far back as the 13th of April. After, however, we shall have waited a sufficient time to collect a force, and to satisfy military men that their force is what it ought to be, to enable them to accomplish the object in view, the period of attack becomes a political question, upon which there can be no difference of opinion. I say nothing about our *defensive* operations, because I am inclined to believe that *Blucher and I are so well united, and so strong, that the enemy cannot do us much mischief.* I am at the advanced post of the whole; the greatest part of the enemy's force is in my front; and *if I am satisfied, others need be under no apprehension.*" He seems to have

* See the letter in Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

contemplated the offensive on the part of the allies, as decisively probable. "Let us have 150,000 men upon the left, 150,000 upon the right; and all the rest, whatever they may be, in the centre; or, after a sufficient centre is formed, as a reserve for the right, left, or centre, as may be most convenient for their march and subsistence, *and I will engage for the result*, as they may be thrown where we please. Let us begin when we shall have 450,000 men."

The views of the duke of Wellington are expressed in this document with a careless vigour and perfect clearness of style, contrasting very advantageously with the Prussian fopperies of Knesebeck, and the confused and lumbering composition of most of his own official despatches. His anticipations of the offensive were disappointed by the event, and his confidence in the defensive strength and union of Blucher and himself was assuredly falsified, by the defeat and carnage of the Prussians on the 16th of June at Ligny, and even by the awful balancing and terrible alternations of victory during the memorable 18th at Waterloo. But a resolute confidence, even though deceived, is one of the first elements of military success, and one of the first endowments of a military chief.

It is observable that the views of the duke of Wellington differ essentially from those of prince Schwartzenberg, and general Knesebeck, and from his own opinion at an earlier period. He would commence operations with half of the allied forces arrived in line. This change is easily accounted for. Napoleon was encompassed by spies and traitors. General Clarke, duke of Feltre, one of the

most ungrateful of those who owed their honours to the revolution and the empire, obtained secret information from subalterns of the war department, over which he had long presided; and Fouché, the minister of police, whose business it was to discover and denounce the culprits, was an arch-traitor himself.

When all attempts to obtain peace, or detach Austria from the coalition, failed, Fouché calculated that Napoleon could not maintain himself, and opened a secret correspondence with prince Metternich. He next wrote a letter to the duke of Wellington; and, having established his communications with him, sent an emissary over to London. This agent was a person who had been French charge d'affaires in America, and spoke English. Whether in pursuance of his instructions, or from being himself an adept in the ambi-dexterous manœuvring of his master Fouché, he addressed himself both to the ministry and opposition. A distinguished whig nobleman repelled him as an intriguer, but he doubtless found more favour in the eyes of the ministers; and, having passed ten days in London, returned to Paris undiscovered and unsuspected.

Fouché's correspondence with Metternich was detected. It proved that he was about to send a confidential emissary to communicate with an Austrian agent at Bâle. Napoleon compelled him to give a letter, and the necessary signs of confidence, to one of the cabinet secretaries*, who acquitted himself so well, that he learned the whole secret of

* Fleury de Chaboulon.

Metternich's mission. The treacherous minister was not punished, or even dismissed. Napoleon summoned him to his cabinet; asked him why he did not resign if he was dissatisfied; called him a traitor, and told him that all France would rejoice were he hanged.* Why was not Fouché sent to the castle of Vincennes,—at least deprived of his office? The answer, as it may be collected from the various narratives of the transaction, including those of Napoleon, Savary, and Lavalette, is that Napoleon was afraid of offending the jacobin adherents of the minister; that Fouché appeared rather an intriguer than a traitor in the business; and that, at the worst, he laboured not for the Bourbons, but for a regency in the name of Napoleon's son.

The month of May was now near its close, and the votes of the French people collected by the districts called communes, upon the re-election of the emperor, and acceptance of the additional act, were returned under seal. A new constitution was prepared by the ministers and the council of state, of which Benjamin Constant, the most able publicist of the coterie of Madame de Staël, was easily persuaded to become a member. M. Constant has left a minute record of what passed between him and Napoleon during their first interview. It is an interesting document, and its authenticity guaranteed by the high character of the relater.

"He did not," says M. Constant, "attempt to deceive me as to his views, or the state of things. He did not affect the merit of coming back to liberty from inclination. 'The nation,' said he to me, 'has

rested twelve years from political agitation, and one year from war. This double repose has caused a longing for activity. France wants, or thinks she wants, speeches (*une tribune*) and assemblies. It was not always so. You, who were in opposition, must remember;—yet it is only the minority; do not deceive yourself. The people, or, if you will, the multitude, desire only me. You did not see that multitude, those peasants, as I advanced from Cannes, rushing, invoking, seeking, saluting me. I am not alone the emperor of the soldiers; I am also the emperor of the peasants—of the plebeians of France.... After all, the people, you see, come back to me. There is a sympathy between us..... The popular fibre responds to mine.... I am sprung from the people. Our nature is the same..... But I would not be the king of a *jaquerie*. If there be means of governing by a constitution, be it so: I sought the empire of the world. I wanted for this, unlimited power. To govern France alone, a constitution may do better.... I wished the empire of the world. Who would not in my place? The world invited me: kings, subjects, precipitated themselves under my sceptre;—those kings, to-day so proud of no longer having a man of the people for their equal. Bring me your ideas,—publicity of discussion, freedom of election, responsibility of ministers, liberty of the press;—I will have all these;—above all, a free press. To stifle it is absurd;—I am convinced on that head.... I had great designs; but fate has disposed of them.... I do not hate liberty: I put it aside when it came in my way; but I understand it, I was nourished in its principles," &c.

Napoleon proposed to his conclave of lawgivers, that, instead of substituting a new system for the old, the constitutional liberty of France should be established for the present by "an additional act to the constitutions of the empire." He was afraid that by abrogating the old imperial laws he should shake the foundations of his title; and eager to direct his whole mind, and that of the nation, against the enemy. The ministers insisted upon a new system of constitutional legislation, in accordance with his pledge; but Napoleon brought over Benjamin Constant, and "the additional act" was published officially in the Moniteur, for the approbation or rejection of the French nation. "I have seen his constitution in the newspaper," said Mr. Grattan, with contemptuous affectation, in his glittering and applauded speech. He might also have seen Magna Charter in the newspaper; and both, though necessarily incomplete, contain the great leading principles of public right and liberty. It, however, did not give satisfaction; and was bitterly attacked in pamphlets and in conversation.* The friends of liberty were too exacting at such a moment; but they suspected Napoleon of an after-thought of despotism.

The national convocation of the Champ de Mai took place in the Champ de Mars on the 1st of June, when the mystic seals were to be opened. The

* Madame de Staël applauded the provisions of the additional act. In a letter to the prince of ———, she says, "The additional articles are all that is wanted for France; nothing less and nothing more;" and adds, "The return of the emperor is prodigious, and surpasses all imagination. *I recommend my son to you.*" — (*Memoirs of the Duc de Rovigo.*)

spectacle is said to have fallen short of the popular fêtes of the republic. It, however, had in it much that was exciting and sublime. The morning was ushered in with a ringing of bells and beating of drums, producing a concert of singular effect. A vast and varied population moved noiseless and orderly towards the scene. A throne and an altar erected upon the plain, — the one occupied by Napoleon with his family around him in classic (not Gothic) robes of state, the other by the ministers of religion in robes more gorgeous and imposing; the countless thousands, civil and military, with every variety of martial and municipal costume; the eagle standards and tri-color civic flags; the inauguration by the performance of divine service; the simultaneous kneeling and rising of that great concourse, from the emperor and the hierarch to the peasant of Auvergne and the Vosges; the announcement of the re-election of the emperor, and acceptance of the additional act by a majority of a million of votes*; the mutual oaths of the people and the prince; the harangue of the representative orator of the nation to the newly elected sovereign; above all, the harangue of Napoleon in reply, beginning with "Emperor, consul, soldier, I hold all of the people;" the firmness of his voice and attitude, the fervour of his words, his gestures, and his looks; — all these produced alternately silent and deep emotion, and awfully loud explosions of the voices of men.

* The numbers were, for the affirmative, 1,532,557; for the negative, 4,802: and the votes, it should be remembered, were given under the protection of secret ballot.

Opinion was not rallied by this pompous ceremonial. The popular enthusiasm had died away, and could not be re-animated. Savary ascribes this unfavourable change to the treason of Fouché, who secretly stimulated the Jacobins aud republicans, and contemplated ridding himself of Napoleon by assassination in the last resort. Fouché's character was perfidious, and his life blood-stained; but Savary was his enemy, and should be received as a witness against him with distrust. Other and adequate causes may be assigned. The emissaries of the Bourbons were not idle. The republicans were alarmed at the ascendancy of the sword; dissatisfied with the additional act; and especially disgusted with the creation, or rather continuance, of a chamber of peers. In fine, enthusiasm is in its nature transient; and the bravest people might well look with a depressed and ill-boding spirit to a contest with the rest of Europe, leagued and armed, and marching against them with a million of soldiers.

The defeat and ruin of Murat about this time was also a discouraging event. Murat, apprehensive, and with reason, that the congress of Vienna, won over by the Bourbons and Talleyrand, contemplated dethroning him, suddenly attacked the Austrians, and proclaimed Italy independent.* The Italian pa-

* Lord Castlereagh, for the purpose of showing that Murat was accessory to the escape from Elba, read several letters, in the house of commons. One of the letters, professing to be from Napoleon to his sister, the queen of Naples, contained a coarse vulgarism; and this Lord Castlereagh emphatically recited, with a bad taste and personal meanness which really did not belong to him. His triumph soon recoiled upon

triots did not appear at his call. They distrusted his capacity, and thought meanly of his character. He had shortly before disclosed the conspiracy of "the patriots of Milan" against the Austrian governor Bellegarde, the Gesler of the Milanese. After some slight successes, he was routed by the Austrians, first at Tolentino, then at Caprano, and escaped to Fréjus in France a disguised and wretched fugitive. The conduct of this wrong-headed and ill-fated person proved equally disastrous to others and to himself. His defection in 1814 turned the scale in favour of the allies, and his inopportune attack upon the Austrians in 1815 cut off Napoleon's only chance of peace at that time. "How can I treat with him," said the emperor Francis, "when he makes his brother-in-law attack me in Italy?"*

On the 7th of June, Napoleon opened the session of the newly created chamber of peers and newly elected chamber of deputies; harangued them on their duties and the dangers of France; was reminded by them in turn of his renunciation of political despotism and military conquest; reviewed the national guard and federate volunteers; appointed a council of government; and on the 12th of June left Paris, at three o'clock in the morning, to take the command of the army, and open the campaign.

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himself. The letters were forgeries by an emigrant French abbé, named Fleuriel, which the count de Blacas, favourite of Louis XVIII., had imposed as authentic on the English minister.

* Gourgaud's Narrative.

The allied armies on the northern frontier were now very different in force and condition from what they were in April. They had then neither organisation nor numbers. An attack by Napoleon was expected from hour to hour. False rumours of his approach kept up a continued state of alarm. The arrival of Wellington and Blucher early in April did not wholly restore confidence. An apprehension prevailed among the friends of the duke, that his reputation might be compromised by the inadequacy of his resources. It did not appear, however, to be shared by himself. His first care was to inspect the frontier, and concert a plan of operation with the Prussians. He occupied cantonments so as to cover Brussels, his head-quarters; and Blucher concentrated his army on the Sambre and Meuse, with his head-quarters at Namur. The effective force of all arms, under the command of the duke of Wellington, has been variously stated from 80,000 to 100,000 men, of whom about half,—probably less,—were British, or of the German legion; the rest, Belgians, Dutch, Hanoverians, Brunswickers, Wirtembergers, and troops of Nassau. The infantry consisted of twenty-four brigades; of which nine British, five Hanoverian, and two German (legion), formed six divisions, denominated English. The remaining brigades,—five Dutch, and one of Nassau,—formed three divisions, called Belgian. The Brunswickers formed a division of themselves. These ten divisions were again formed into two grand corps of infantry: the first, of five divisions, under the orders of the prince of Orange, having his head-quarters at Brain le Compte, on the road from Mons

to Brussels; the second, consisting of the five remaining divisions, under the orders of lord Hill, with his head-quarters at Brussels. The cavalry, from 12,000 to 15,000 strong, was under the command of lord Anglesea, with his head-quarters at Grammont, on the British right, nearly in line with Waterloo. The whole artillery consisted of 250 pieces, of which the grand park was cantoned round Ghent. Quatre Bras, on the road from Charleroi to Brussels, was appointed the general rallying point by the duke of Wellington, with a view to communication with Blucher and the Prussians. 'Let the observer place himself at Charleroi, looking due north to Brussels, he will observe the positions to the left of the Charleroi road occupied by the British; and he will also observe that the great road of Charleroi is joined, as it approaches Mont St. Jean, Waterloo, and Brussels, by a road running at an angle on his left, and passing through the Bois de Bossu and Nivelles.

The positions on the observer's left, or west of the Charleroi road, were, as has been observed, occupied by the British. Those on the right, or east, were occupied by the Prussians. The Prussian army, under Blucher, has been stated variously at 90,000, 100,000, and 120,000 men of all arms *, with 300 pieces of artillery. It may be set

* The French bulletins are charged with bad faith, especially as to their own numbers, and those of the enemy; but the Prussian accounts are much more unscrupulously faithless. Blucher's despatches, written in the name of his chief of the staff, and referring to Blucher only as a third person, are remarkable for personal boastings and gross exaggerations.

down at 100,000, divided into four corps, commanded by generals Ziethen, Pirch, Thielman, and Bulow. Blucher had his head-quarters at Namur. Fleurus, in advance of Charleroi, to the right of the great road, was his general rallying point; and he occupied the Sambre and Meuse from Charleroi to Liege, which was held by the corps of Bulow. The Austrians, advancing upon France both by the Rhine and the Alps (having routed and dethroned Murat), were yet far from the line of coöperation; and the Russians were at a still greater distance. In the course of July, the coalition would press with at least 600,000 disposable men on the French frontier; but at this period, from the 10th to the 15th of June, there were but the two armies of Wellington and Blucher, which may be estimated at 200,000 disposable men, and were disposed as already described.

Marshal Soult, duke of Dalmatia, had assumed, early in June, the command of the grand army (so called by way of distinction from the armies or corps of observation of the Alps, the Rhine, and the West,) on the northern frontier, with the rank of major-general, in which Berthier had been employed through so many brilliant campaigns. Having, in an order of the day, appealed to the courage and patriotism of the French troops, by the new cry of liberty, as well as the ancient one of glory, he reviewed the troops and inspected the fortresses. Napoleon, on the 14th, joined the imperial guard; took the command of the army, and issued, from his head-quarters at Beaumont, an address, which may be called a *chef-d'œuvre* of martial rhetoric, con-

cluding with these words: — "for every Frenchman who has courage *, the moment is come to conquer or die."

In order to follow even a mere sketch of this campaign, — the most momentous of modern times, and so brief that it should be designated not by days but by hours, — the eye should be kept constantly on the map of the seat of war.

Napoleon commenced hostilities with five corps of infantry commanded by generals d'Erlon, Reille, Vandamme, Gerard, and Lobau; the imperial guard without a commander, marshal Mortier having remained sick at Beaumont; four corps of cavalry under the orders of generals Pajol, Excelmans, Kellerman, and Milhaud, commanded in chief by marshal Grouchy; — in all, 122,000 men, with 350 pieces of artillery. Having masked his movements, and concentrated his forces with his usual skill and rapidity, he bivouacked within his frontier on the night of the 14th, unobserved by the Prussians; and at three o'clock on the 15th crossed the line in three columns, moving upon Marchiennes, Charleroi, and Chatelet. His main design consisted in dividing Wellington and Blucher, so as to fight them separately. It was obvious, from his unmasked movement on the 15th, that he had selected Blucher for his first object of attack; presuming, he says, that Blucher, from his hussar habits and reckless impetuosity, would sooner come to the aid of Wellington, than Wellington, with his more circumspect

* The common French expression, "qui a du cœur," in this address, has been usually mistranslated "who has a heart."

character, to the aid of Blucher. It may also be suspected that, regarding, as he professed, the Prussians as secondary, he designed to put them *hors de combat*, and then bring his whole force to bear undivided upon his chief adversary. This movement was hardly begun, when he was obliged to halt. General Bourmont, chief of the staff of the fourth corps, and two colonels, named Clouet and Villoutreys, were reported deserters to the enemy.* After making the necessary arrangements consequent on this desertion, he moved once more forward, drove in the Prussian outposts of Ziethen, and occupied Charleroi. From Charleroi to Brussels is fourteen leagues, by the great line of road through Gosselies, Frasnes, Quatre Bras, Genappe, and Waterloo. The corps of Reille pushed on to Gosselies, and occupied it with little resistance. Grouchy, with the cavalry, pushed Ziethen on Fleurus. Ney, at the head of the whole left wing, about 40,000 men, was ordered to make for Quatre Bras, overwhelm all resistance by the force at his disposal, take up that important position, and push strong outposts on the

* Bourmont, after several refusals, repeated his solicitations for employment with a suspicious pertinacity, and succeeded through the influence of Ney and Labedoyère. Ney was with Napoleon when the news of Bourmont's desertion arrived. "Well," said he; "your protégé, Bourmont, for whom you answered so confidently, and whom I employed at your request, is gone over to the enemy."—"I thought him so devoted," said Ney, "that I would have answered for him as for myself."—"Come, marshal," rejoined Napoleon, interrupting him, "they who are blue continue blue, and they who are white continue white." Bourmont had been a Chouan in La Vendée.

roads of Brussels and Namur — the respective head-quarters of Wellington and Blucher. A brigade of troops of Nassau, under the orders of the prince Bernard of Saxe Weimar, offered some resistance at Frasnes, and fell back on Quatre Bras. Ney, instead of advancing to Quatre Bras, stopped short at Frasnes. Ziethen, pushed by Napoleon in person with the cavalry of the guard, concentrated his force behind Fleurus. Night now came on.

At seven in the evening of this day (the 15th) the duke of Wellington was informed, by a courier from Blucher, of the forward movement of the French. He sent orders through the cantonments that the troops should hold themselves in readiness. In four or five hours after, a second courier announced the commencement of hostilities by Napoleon,— and his line of movement. The duke of Wellington, with several of his officers, was at a ball at Brussels when this intelligence reached him. No excuse is necessary for introducing here what would be recalled, by association, to the memory of most readers, and many would long to read once more, — the verses in which this incident is touched by Lord Byron: —

" There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men:
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell:
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes likes a rising knell!

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* * * *

" Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress;
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness:
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated: who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise?"

There appears no just ground for the assertion that the duke of Wellington was dilatory or surprised. When he received the first despatch from Blucher, the movements and intentions of Napoleon were not yet sufficiently developed for any counter movement by the British. It was doubtful whether he designed attacking these by the road of Mons, or the Prussians, as he did, by that of Charleroi. This question was resolved by the second despatch, and the duke of Wellington issued to the army its orders of march and concentration. As to his being present, under such circumstances, with his officers at a ball; brave men, on the eve of honourable danger, feel a certain "alacrity of spirit," † which would be indulged by a prudent chief. The army of the duke of Wellington was in motion during the night of the 15th. The distinguished fifth division, and the Brunswicker division, under its gallant duke, moved on Quatre Bras.

On the morning of the 16th, Napoleon renewed

† "I have not that alacrity of spirit,
Nor cheer of mind *that I was wont to have.*"
Shakspeare — Richard III.

to Ney his orders to occupy a position in advance of Quatre Bras, astride on the road to Brussels; and sent him, at the same time, 3000 cuirassiers, making the French left wing 46,000 men. Napoleon himself advanced with his centre and right to attack Blucher before he could be joined by Bulow from his distant quarters at Liege, on the one side, or by the duke of Wellington, from Brussels, on the other. The fire was opened by the French at Fleurus. After a short and light cannonade, the Prussian advanced posts fell back upon the main army, which occupied the villages of St. Amand with its right, Sombref with its left, and Ligny with its centre. At ten o'clock, Napoleon halted; formed for battle; reconnoitred the Prussian position, along his line of videttes, from heights and windmills; and inferred, from the exposure of the Prussian right, that Blucher expected the support of Wellington through Quatre Bras.

An aide-de-camp from marshal Ney announced that, instead of occupying Quatre Bras, that marshal stopped short on hearing the cannonade to his right, but was still ready to advance upon a repetition of orders, and receiving an explanation of this new incident. Napoleon replied to Ney, that the incident was not new, but a night old; and reiterated to him the order to advance, occupy Quatre Bras, and detach, on his right, 8000 infantry, and a division of cavalry, which should attack the Prussian reserve at Bry, in rear of Ligny. "Tell him," said Napoleon, to the aide-de-camp charged with the orders, "that the fate of France is in his hands!"* This

* Relation du Gén. Gourgaud.

movement, had it been executed, would, according to the best military authorities, have annihilated Blucher.

At three o'clock the French commenced the attack, under Vandamme, Gerard, and Grouchy, upon the whole Prussian line. The attack of Vandamme upon St. Amand was severe and unsatisfactory. At five o'clock, Ligny, taken and retaken several times, was still bravely disputed by both armies, and partially occupied by Gerard. At the same time, Grouchy had driven back the Prussian left (cavalry) from its outposts to its main position behind Sombref. Napoleon prepared to bring up, in person, his guard against the Prussian centre. Whilst he was directing the necessary movements, Vandamme announced the approach of a British column, of about 20,000 men, on his left. Napoleon could not conceive this movement possible, but still changed his dispositions to meet the hostile column. It proved to be the French corps of d'Erlon, who had moved towards the cannonade. Napoleon resumed his first dispositions and movements, attacked and carried Ligny, the Prussian centre; dislodged the Prussian left by a charge of cavalry, in which Blucher was unhorsed (whether by the French in pursuit, or his own Prussians in their disorder, is doubtful) and compelled the Prussians to retreat at all points, with the loss of forty guns, and from 15,000 to 20,000 men *hors de combat.* The Prussian army, according to the account dictated by Napoleon to general Gourgaud, was saved from utter destruction only by Vandamme's error, which caused two hours' delay; and by the approach of night. The French estimated their own loss at 7000 men.

Whilst Napoleon, with his centre and left wing, was engaged with the Prussians at Ligny, marshal Ney, less successfully, disputed with the British the position of Quatre Bras. The prince of Orange, by order of the duke of Wellington, proceeded early in the morning to Quatre Bras, joined there the prince of Saxe-Weimar, and occupied, unmolested, with only 9000 or 10,000 men, that vital position for several hours. It was now that Ney perceived the fatality of his not advancing, and all the importance of the orders of Napoleon. He moved forward so late as mid-day, in pursuance of fresh orders, with 14,000 infantry, 3000 cavalry, and forty-four guns. At two o'clock the respective outposts exchanged fire; and at three o'clock, within hearing of the cannonade at Ligny, the French "frankly"* assailed the British. The prince of Orange and the Belgians gave way to the French division of general Foy. The duke of Brunswick with the Brunswickers, and sir Thomas Picton with the fifth division, came up opportunely, at their utmost speed, and in some disorder, with only 1200 or 1500 Brunswick cavalry, and ten or twelve guns. The combat was vigorously renewed. The British had the advantage of numbers; the French of cavalry and artillery. The duke of Brunswick fell at the head of his hussars, who gave way. A part of Picton's division was forced into a wood, but there rallied. The third division, under general Alten, came up, was assailed before it had yet time to form, and lost a regimental colour during a charge

* French account.

of French cuirassiers. General Cooke brought up his division of the guards, and the French were repulsed. Ney had left considerably more than half his force of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, in his rear at Frasnes, and now felt the want of them. It was too late in the day to bring up a reinforcement, and he fell back, in some disorder, upon his former position. The British loss, from their want of cavalry and artillery, exceeded that of the French.

Ney's operation thus wholly failed. Whilst under fire, the ardour of his character and impetuosity of his courage displayed themselves; but in the preparatory dispositions and movements he was slow and irresolute. He might have easily occupied Quatre Bras, not only on the 15th, but by an earlier advance on the morning of the 16th; and his not doing so was, beyond all doubt, a fatal error. The only question is, whether the error arose from the want of military instinct and energy on his part, or from the want of sufficiently precise and peremptory orders on the part of Napoleon.* "Marshal Ney," says Napoleon†, "would, in our other campaigns, have occupied Quatre Bras at six in the morning, routed and taken the Belgian division, and either turned Blucher's left by a detachment along

* L'empereur, après lui avoir donné ces ordres, ajouta, — "Monsieur le maréchal, vous connaissez bien la position de Quatre Bras?" — "Oui, sire," répondit le maréchal, "comment ne la réconnaitrais-je pas? Il y a vingt ans que j'ai fait la guerre dans ce pays; *cette position est la clef de tout.*" (Gen. Gourgaud. Relation écrite à Ste. Hélène.)

† Mémoires de Napoléon.

the Namur road, which should fall upon the rear of his line of battle; or else, moving rapidly on Genappe, he would have surprised the Brunswicker and fifth divisions on their march from Brussels, and then proceeded against the first and third British divisions, which arrived by the road of Nivelles, — all without cavalry and artillery, and harassed with their fatiguing march." The subsequent conduct of Ney, at Paris, strongly indicates that his faculties were then disordered, and countenances the assertion of Gourgaud or Napoleon, that the sense of his tergiversations in 1814 and 1815 had produced in him a "*bouleversement moral.*"

The duke of Wellington passed the night of the 16th at Quatre Bras, supposing the Prussians still in their line of positions at Ligny. His remaining divisions continued to fall in until the morning of the 17th. He now discovered the defeat of the Prussians, and their retreat upon Wavres by Tilly and Gembloux, pursued and harassed by French light cavalry. Napoleon, judging that the duke of Wellington would fall back to take a new position in line with the Prussians, sent, during the night, orders to Ney to renew his attack, and push the British rear-guard at daybreak. He, at the same time, detached Lobau, with two divisions of infantry, one corps of light cavalry, and one of cuirassiers, to favour Ney's attack, by taking the British in flank from the road of Namur; and ordered forward general Grouchy, with the cavalry of Excelmans, and the third and fourth corps of infantry (Vandamme's and Gerard's), to press Blucher, so as to prevent his rallying his forces, and forming a

junction with Wellington. Grouchy's orders further were, that he should keep constantly between the Prussians and the great road from Charleroi to Brussels, so as to maintain his communications with Napoleon, and form a junction with him whenever necessary. The result of these dispositions was, that Napoleon would direct his left and centre, about 70,000 men, and 240 pieces of cannon, against Wellington; whilst Grouchy, with the right wing, of about 35,000 men and 110 pieces, would engage or harass Blucher.

The duke of Wellington, informed of the result of the battle of Ligny early in the morning of the 17th, immediately gave orders to fall back in the direction of Brussels, and a general movement was begun, by the roads of Genappe and Nivelles, upon Waterloo. The rear-guard, of cavalry and light artillery, commanded by lord Anglesey, masked this movement. Napoleon, having arrived at Quatre Bras, opened with a light battery upon the British. It rained in torrents. The left wing, under Ney, did not yet debouche. The marshal, having come up, was rebuked by Napoleon for his tardiness, and excused himself by saying, he thought the British were still in force at Quatre Bras. Napoleon now took the direct command of his left wing, as well as centre. The British retired, and the French advanced, but slowly. The infantry marched ankle deep in mud, and the cavalry and artillery were equally embarrassed in their movements by the state of the ground. At Genappe, the 7th hussars (British) charged a French regiment of lancers, and failed. It was lord Anglesea's own regiment. He

ordered up the 1st life guards, placed himself at their head, and soon broke and drove back the lancers. Lord Anglesea continued to retire, galled slightly by an intermittent fire from the French horse artillery. At six in the evening, the British began to return a heavier discharge. The thickness of the atmosphere concealed their force and movements, and, consequently, the cause of this heavier fire. Napoleon, to discover the extent to which the rear-guard had been reinforced, displayed his cuirassiers and artillery for a feint attack, and the British immediately unmasked so many batteries as satisfied him that the duke of Wellington was there, and had taken up a position with his whole army. Night prevented further operations on the 17th. The duke of Wellington occupied Mont St. Jean, with his head-quarters at the village of Waterloo, and the forest of Soignies in his rear. Napoleon took his position on the range of heights before Planchenois, facing Mont St. Jean, with his head quarters at a farmhouse called Caillou.

Grouchy, in the mean time, with the French right wing, followed the retreat of Blucher. At ten o'clock in the evening, Napoleon, supposing Grouchy at Wavres, announced to him that a great battle would be fought next day, and ordered him first to detach a division of 8000 men of all arms, with sixteen pieces of cannon, which should join and operate with the grand army against the British, and then, as soon as he found Blucher decidedly retreating upon either Brussels or Liege, to follow and support the detachment with his main force. When this despatch was an hour on its way, a com-

munication from Grouchy, dated five o'clock, announced that he was still only at Gembloux; that he knew not in what direction Blucher was retreating; but that he had sent advanced guards upon the roads of Brussels and Liege. A second despatch of Napoleon, dated four o'clock in the morning, repeated the previous orders to Grouchy. It was not long on its way, when a second despatch from Grouchy announced that he had, since his last communication, learned the retreat of Blucher, with his whole force, upon Wavres; that his first thought was to follow on the traces of Blucher instantly; but that the troops were bivouacked and preparing their soup when the information reached him, and he, upon reflection, judged it advisable not to advance on Wavres until next morning, when the troops should be refreshed. The slow advance of Grouchy, his losing the trace of Blucher, and his halt for the night at Gembloux, after only two leagues' march, have not, after much controversy, been satisfactorily accounted for. Blucher had gained three hours upon the French general, and anticipated him in the possession of Wavres, which placed him in a situation to communicate by the post of Ohaime with the left of the British.

The duke of Wellington, on the 17th, communicated to marshal Blucher his resolution to give battle, and asked the support of a corps of Prussians. "The marshal promised me," says the duke, "that in case we should be attacked, he would support me with one or more corps as might be necessary." According to the Prussian despatch, the English general asked the support of two corps,

and Blucher, in reply, promised that of his whole army, with a proposal, that if Napoleon did not attack on the 18th, they should jointly attack him on the 19th. A narrative published by the Prussian general, Muffling, improving on this braggart version of the Prussian bulletin, says that Blucher asked time only to distribute food and cartridges to his men. These idle and unfounded vaunts, put forth on behalf of Blucher, to conceal the extent of his defeat at Ligny, have been adopted and repeated by English writers, in the face, not only of the simple truth, simply stated by the duke of Wellington, but of the conclusive fact that Blucher did not come up on the 18th until near the close of the battle and of the day. Night came; the firing ceased; and both sides prepared themselves — the armies sleeping, the chiefs waking — for the next day's memorable strife.

There is something in the circumstances of the battle of Waterloo which recalls, by a close and affecting association, the last fatal battle between Hannibal and Scipio in the plains of Zama. "Erexerant," says Livy, "omnium animos Scipio et Hannibal, velut ad supremum certamen comparati duces. ..... Ad hoc discrimen procedunt postero die duorum opulentissimorum populorum longe clarissimi duces, duo fortissimi exercitus, multa ante parta decora aut cumulaturi eo die aut eversuri." The part played by the assailant in the drama of a battle has the advantage in attraction and *éclat*. Napoleon, having conferred with his chief officers, and given them their orders, went out on foot from his quarters in the farmhouse of Caillou, accom-

panied only by Bertrand, at one o'clock in the morning, visited his outposts, and saw the fires of the British bivouacks bordering the forest of Soignies. The men of both armies, fatigued with their efforts on the preceding day, slept in the silence of profound repose. At the break of day he returned to his quarters, convinced, by his own observations, and by the report of two Belgian deserters, that the British general had resolved on giving battle. His great fear seems to have been that Wellington would continue his retrograde movement beyond the forest of Soignies, — which, in his actual position, would, Napoleon judged, cut off his retreat, — and, having formed a junction with Blucher before Brussels, give battle with an overwhelming superiority of numbers. It rained through the night, and during the early part of the morning. This was in favour of the British: they were in position, and the enemy in movement.

The duke of Wellington, with the first light of the morning, presented himself in his defensive position at Mont St. Jean, occupying a line of heights from the village of La Haye and the farmhouse of Papillotte on his left wing, to La Haye Sainte, in front of his left centre, and Goumont or Hougoumont in front of his right centre. His right wing, thrown back, occupied Merkbraine and Braine la Leud. The reserve was posted at Mont St. Jean, at the intersection of the two roads of Charleroi and Nivelles. The cavalry, under lord Anglesea, was ranged in three lines in the rear of the left centre line of battle.

From the state of the weather, and of the ground,

joined with the delay in waiting for a further supply of ammunition after the consumption at Ligny, it was some hours before the French appeared in motion. Napoleon, at half past eight, again reconnoitred the British line; and, having meditated for a few moments, charged his aides-de-camp with his orders to the commanders of the several corps. About nine the British beheld from their position the French army moving, with admirable order, in eleven columns, which formed three lines, with the batteries flanking the several columns; and at half past nine the first French line began to deploy, whilst the regimental music of both armies, the sounds of the drum, the trumpet, and the shrill but animating English fife, were sometimes mingled, and sometimes seemed to challenge and reply.

The French movements, executed with all the precision and beauty of the parade, and presenting a spectacle of the deepest and the most magnificent interest to their adversaries, — from whom they were separated only by a short distance, and a slightly inclining vale — were not completed until half past ten. Napoleon, having once more rode along the lines, amidst enthusiastic cries of "Vive l'empereur!" gave his last orders for the attack, and placed himself on foot with his guards at the farm-house of Rossomme.

Prince Jerome Bonaparte, with his division, commenced the fire upon the British right centre at Hougoumont. A skirmishing musketry fire of light troops soon gave way to a heavy cannonade. The British unmasked a numerous battery, which was soon answered by the battery of a French

division and twelve pieces of horse artillery. General Cooke, with his division of the guards, defended the position of Hougoumont. The wood, which formed part of it, was taken, retaken, again taken, and again recovered. General Foy came to the aid of Jerome Bonaparte; and after a desperate struggle of near two hours, during which the field was strewed with the dead and dying, the British had abandoned the wood, but kept possession of the house or château of Hougoumont, and its garden. The walls of the house and of the garden were loop-holed, and, thus covered, the British kept up a deadly fire upon the assailants. A desperate effort to force the gate of the court-yard, made by the French, was repulsed by the British with the bayonet, and the barricade restored. Napoleon ordered up a few howitzers, the shells from which fell upon the house and every thing combustible around it. The château was soon in flames, and some wounded soldiers of both armies became the victims. Still the position was disputed bravely as ever.

In the mean time Napoleon resolved to make his grand attack upon the British left centre. It was confided by him to Ney, who declared that he was ready, and waited only the signal to begin. Napoleon, before he ordered the attack, took a view once more of the field of battle. He observed on his right, about two leagues off, in the direction of St. Lambert, what seemed an advancing column. Was it a detachment from Grouchy, or the Prussians? All the glasses of the imperial staff were brought to bear upon this object. Opinions were divided. As it might be the Prussians, Napoleon ordered a de-

tachment of 3000 cavalry to his right. A Prussian hussar was brought in prisoner. He was the bearer of a letter to the duke of Wellington from Bulow, whose advanced guard it was that had been observed. The intercepted despatch was sent to Grouchy, with reiterated orders to bear upon St. Lambert (the French right), and take Bulow's corps in the rear. Ney's attack was suspended. The offensive movement of the Prussians became more conspicuous and formidable. Napoleon ordered the count de Lobau with 8000 men to move upon St. Lambert, and with this force, joined to the detachment already sent, to check the Prussians, were they even 30,000, until he should hear the fire of Grouchy, and then to fall upon them furiously. All this passed, according to the French accounts, between twelve and one o'clock, and during the utmost heat of action at Hougoumont. Bulow appeared stationary, waiting the coming up of his artillery. It was now that Napoleon ordered Ney to attack and take La Haye Sainte, the British left centre, the farmhouse of Papillotte, and the hamlet of La Haye, the extreme left. This would cut off the communication with the Prussians. Eighty pieces of cannon opened a terrific fire upon the British. Napoleon looked on from an eminence near the farmhouse of La Belle Alliance, with a view of both wings right and left; —his own and Wellington's;—and holding his reserves in readiness, to be directed by him in person. General d'Erlon, charging under cover of a tremendous fire with two divisions of his corps and a body of cuirassiers, gained the crest of the hill of La Haye Sainte, driving before him a Belgian division.

Sir Thomas Picton brought up the brigades of Kempt and Pack, which opened upon D'Erlon's flank a close and destructive fire. Picton led the attack, and was killed at the head of his division. The French column, unsteady and reeling, seemed about to abandon the position. Lord Anglesea, observing this, ordered sir W. Ponsonby's brigade of cavalry to charge. The French were routed, with the loss of two eagles, seven pieces of cannon, and dreadful havoc in killed and wounded. The British cavalry, borne away by their ardour and the impetuosity of the charge, pursued the enemy until they became exposed in flank. Napoleon, perceiving the rout of D'Erlon, had galloped to the spot; and taking advantage of Ponsonby's gallant but rash advance, ordered a strong body of cuirassiers and lancers to attack the British squadrons. Unable to resist this unequal and terrible shock, they retreated before a charge of cavalry, and under a galling fire of artillery and sharpshooters. Sir W. Ponsonby and his horse both fell mortally wounded. The duke of Wellington ordered up lord Edward Somerset's heavy brigade of cavalry, which soon checked and drove back the French cuirassiers; but D'Erlon re-formed, recovered his cannon, and obtained possession of Papillotte and La Haye.

The attack and defence of Hougoumont were all this time deadly and brave as ever. General Cooke, of the guards, was severely wounded. Sir John Byng, the next in command, maintained his position in the country-house and garden, with the same steadiness and gallantry, was reinforced by order of

the duke of Wellington, and recovered from the French a portion of the wood.

Napoleon, it has been observed, having made his dispositions to meet the advance of the Prussians, ordered Ney to make his grand attack upon the British left centre at La Haye Sainte. "A battle," says he*, "like a drama, has three parts;—the beginning, the middle, and the dénouement." This attack was the middle in his dramatic design, which should develope the resources and intentions of the adversary, and decide the catastrophe. It was about three o'clock that Ney attacked the farm of La Haye Sainte, occupied by the German legion, and after above two hours' fighting, carried it. During this conflict, Napoleon rode along the first lines of infantry and cavalry in the midst of shells, bullets, and grape shot. General Devaux, who commanded the artillery of the imperial guard, was killed by his side.

The advance of the French upon Mont St. Jean, and the single debouche of the forest of Soignies upon Brussels, produced consternation in the rear of the British, among the wounded, the wagon train, and those who had fled from the field. The road to Brussels was crowded with this miscellaneous and disorderly rabble. The French appear to have expected each moment to see Wellington retreating. Some French narratives of the battle assert that the duke already began such dispositions as indicated that he contemplated the necessity of retreat. The supposition is wholly groundless.

* Relation du Gen. Gourgaud.

He had, about an hour before, ordered up two divisions of lord Hill's corps from the right, when that wing was no longer menaced.

It was now four o'clock. Intelligence reached Napoleon that the French skirmishers were retiring before the Prussians; that the Prussians appeared to be 40,000 strong; that there was no account of Grouchy, and that he, instead of leaving Gembloux at the break of day, as he engaged to do, had not yet broken up his bivouac at half past nine in the morning. Grouchy's excuse was the bad weather and state of the roads. But these obstacles did not retard Blucher. The count de Lobau and Bulow were soon engaged. A fire of thirty pieces of artillery was opened respectively by the Prussian centre in advance, and the French right flank which was opposed to it. Lobau, after an hour's cannonade, broke the first Prussian échelon; but the two other échelons, which were somewhat behind, soon came up, and threatened to turn the French line. Lobau, to avoid this, retreated towards the French centre. Blucher had now joined Bulow, and the fire of the Prussian artillery was doubled. So near were the Prussians, that their bullets fell and tore up the ground at the feet of Napoleon at La Belle Alliance. He sent a strong detachment of the young and old guard in aid of Lobau. The direct advance of the Prussians was checked, but they still moved in a direction to turn the French line.

D'Erlon, by his possession of Papillotte and La Haye, turned, at the same time, the British left and the right of Bulow. Ney, whose orders were to

maintain himself in La Haye Sainte, pushed forward with cavalry and artillery, and did severe execution upon the British. Wellington commanded a retrograde movement, to obtain an advantage of ground which would cover the men from Ney's formidable masses of cavalry, and fire of artillery. The movement of Wellington diffused a treacherous hope among the French. Ney's advance was hailed, by the staff of Napoleon, as the forerunner of victory. Napoleon said it was premature, and full of perilous consequence; and Soult exclaimed, with vehemence, "He is compromising us as at Jena."* Ney's impetuous courage under fire, and his irresolution in the absence of the immediate stimulant of danger, were equally liable to produce disastrous effects. Whilst he was thus wasting his strength upon the British infantry, without commensurate advantage, Blucher was pressing, with his whole force, towards the French. All hope of the coming up of Grouchy vanished. That general was, in fact, engaged, at Wavres, with the Prussian corps of Thielman, supposing that he had the whole Prussian army on his hands. Thielman sent to Blucher for support. The Prussian marshal, with equal judgment and generosity in this instance, replied, that "it was on the spot where he was, and no where else, the affair was to be decided; that any reverse at Wavres would be repaired by victory at Waterloo;" left Thielman to extricate himself as he best could, and came to the relief of his ally. Marshal Grouchy took a different,

* Relation du Gen. Gourgaud.

and far less sagacious, view of a situation nearly, if not exactly, similar, and compromised a brilliant reputation of twenty-five years.*

Blucher, it has been observed, was preparing to fall on the French with his whole force. Two courses were open to Napoleon: to abandon the field

* An exile in America, he vindicated himself in France by publications bearing the name of colonel Grouchy, his son. Without entering into the controversy, the facts may be very briefly stated: — Grouchy's instructions, in the spirit and letter, bore, that he should keep his left in communication with the French right centre, and separate Blucher from Wellington. He failed in both. The state of the weather and the roads, the non-arrival of one, and the late arrival of another despatch, are urged by him in his defence. The next charge against him is this. — The thunder of the cannonade at Waterloo was heard by him at Wavres. Generals Gerard and Excelmans, judging, like Blucher, that the contest before Mont St. Jean should supersede every other, advised Grouchy to move at once in the direction of the cannonade. Grouchy, alarmed at the responsibility of exercising such a discretion, replied, that "the war of inspiration belonged only to the general-in-chief." This is the essence of the question; and the expression of Grouchy is placed beyond doubt by the testimony of Gerard. As to what Grouchy says, in his printed vindication, of his presence when Napoleon rebuked Ney for exercising a discretion, and departing from his orders, the case is really not in point; and it was obviously an after thought, or he would have expressly urged it when Gerard pressed his hastening to the cannonade. There appears not the slightest ground to impeach Grouchy's honour; nor has it been, in point of fact, impeached. He fought admirably on the 16th, but he was then under the immediate eye and direction of Napoleon. On the 17th and 18th he was detached and distant, and the dread of committing himself seems to have deprived him of all vigour and decision.

to Wellington and Blucher; or to endeavour, by a desperate effort with his reserve, to rout Wellington before Blucher had yet brought his whole weight into the scale. He chose the latter; and directed, in the judgment of military men, one of his most brilliant manœuvres. It was a change of front, upon the centre, the left forward, executed by the mass of his guard in reserve, which had not yet fired a gun. The result, without going into particulars was, that he presented two fronts — one to the British, the other to the Prussians.

This fierce and final attack was made upon the British centre about seven in the evening. The imperial guard, under the immediate command of Napoleon, advanced in two columns, leaving four battalions as a reserve. Ney again led the attack. His horse was shot under him, and he appeared on foot at the head of his column.* The fire of musketry and artillery caused dreadful havoc on both sides. The first British line was broken. "For a moment," says general Alava, aide-de-camp to the duke of Wellington, "the victory was undecided, and even more than doubtful." The duke, however, rallied in person the troops which had given way. The French repeated and reiterated their attacks, whilst the fire from the British squares and batteries carried off the heads of their columns, and ravaged the interior of their masses as they began to deploy. The British reserved their fire until the enemy came near, in spite of the artifices and intrepidity of the French officers, who advanced

* Ney's letter to Fouché.

before the men, and tried to provoke a premature discharge. The grenadiers of the imperial guard were riddled by a close volley from general Maitland's brigade of English guards, and the chasseurs of the French guard equally maltreated by a flank fire from a division of the corps of lord Hill. The English guards, keeping up the fire by independent files, completed the disorganisation of the enemy. Those in the rear, seeing that the imperial guard was foiled and broken, became disheartened. Blucher took La Haye from D'Erlon, and through this post inundated the field with his cavalry. Lobau was cut off from the French centre. Blucher pressed on the French flank. The tide of attack and victory now completely turned. The duke of Wellington ordered a general movement of his army in advance; and the British, become the assailants, charged from the centre with the bayonet upon the imperial guards. These famous troops gave way, defending themselves in squares against the charges of the British cavalry, under a storm of musketry and grape shot. The mass of the French army was at this time in a state of rout and panic, ascribed by the French to false announcements and cries of alarm by traitors in their own ranks. It is certain that their reverses and the pressure of the allies, though great, did not warrant their extreme state of disorder and consternation. The imperial guard, or the wreck of it, soon shared the general rout. Napoleon made a last effort, in a position before Planchenois, to rally the fugitives, and ordered a battery which he found there to fire upon the British cavalry, which was rapidly advancing with lord

Anglesea at its head. The gallant chief of the British cavalry, conspicuous through the day from his splendid uniform, and the prodigal intrepidity with which he led in person to the charge, drew upon him the attention and admiration of the enemy. French officers have declared, in a tone of mournful remembrance, that he recalled, at the moment, to their imaginations the brave and unfortunate Murat. The last French fire, commanded in person by Napoleon, carried away lord Anglesea's leg. Napoleon, with Soult, Drouet, Bertrand, Ney, and the survivors of his staff, were protected only by the battalion of general Cambroune, formed in a square. "He was about to throw himself into the square," says general Gourgaud, in his journal, "and share the fate of his old grenadiers, when marshal Soult, who was by his side, said, 'Ah, sire, the enemy are but too fortunate,' and turned his horse's head towards Charleroi."

Wellington and Blucher met at La Belle Alliance about ten o'clock at night, and congratulated each other, on a victory more disastrous and decisive than the victories of Cannæ and Thrasymene. It would be useless to specify losses where an empire was lost. The British were reduced and fatigued by twelve hours' fighting, and the pursuit devolved exclusively upon Blucher and the Prussians.

The French, somewhat paradoxically, assimilate the battles of Marengo and Waterloo. Had Dessaix hung back like Grouchy, Marengo, they say, would have been as Waterloo; had Grouchy come up like Dessaix, Waterloo would have been as Marengo.

A question has been raised upon the extent to

which the Prussians influenced the result. According to the Prussian bulletin, the duke of Wellington left marshal Blucher to defend himself unaided on the 16th, but Blucher, in similar circumstances, on the 18th, came up and saved Wellington. This authority is far from conclusive, even with the interested corroboration of the French. But the question is one of uncertain speculative probabilities. Napoleon's grand and fatal attack with his reserves might, on the one hand, have succeeded were he not assailed in flank by the Prussians, and deprived during the crisis of the action of such an officer as Lobau with 10,000 men; but on the other hand the British had maintained their principal positions with such steady bravery, whilst the attention and force of Napoleon were undivided, as to warrant the opinion that they might repulse the French to the last unaided by their allies.

Nothing is more easy than to criticise disaster; or more tempting, where success is to be flattered by depreciating greatness. But impartial posterity will assign the relative places of Napoleon and Wellington:—to the former, according to his vast and marvellous career; the traits of inspiration and discovery with which he enriched the annals, and extended the boundaries of the art of war; the point whence he rose to a supremacy before which men bowed their actions and their minds; the impress of his genius upon the age in which he lived;—to the latter, according to the general tenor of his achievements, the resources at his command, the period of the great contest between feudalism and revolution in which it was his fortune to appear;—to neither, according to the unscrupulous but disinterested zealots of a fallen

chief, the partisans who laud a prosperous patron and party leader with parasite eulogies, or the catastrophe of a single, however momentous, battle.*

The parallel holds as curiously at the close as at the opening of the battles of Zama and Waterloo. "Hannibal" says Livy again, "cum paucis equitibus inter tumultum elapsus, Adrumetum perfugit, omnia et in prœlio et ante aciem priusquam excederet pugna, expertus, *et confessione etiam Scipionis*, omniumque peritorum militiæ, illam laudem adeptus, singulari arte aciem eo die instruxisse." The same testimony is borne to Napoleon. The following opinion was expressed, with rare modesty, by the duke of Wellington a day or two after the battle, in a letter to his mother, lady Mornington: — "Bonaparte did his duty — he fought the battle with infinite skill, perseverance, and bravery, — and this I do not say from any personal motive of claiming merit to myself — *for the victory is to be ascribed to the superior physical force and invincible constancy of British soldiers.*" Napoleon's plan and dispositions for separating Wellington and Blucher, so as to engage them in detail with his inferior force, were in the judgment of military men, — "*omnium peritorum militiæ*," — admirably conceived, and his efforts during the emergencies of action to repair disaster or rectify mistake master-traits of military instinct and science.† Why then was he con-

* Cæsar, for the first time, disputed life — not victory — at Munda, and with a boy.

† Some absurd fictions respecting his expressions and personal demeanour during the battle, imposed upon English

quered? Because the design alone wholly belongs to the chief, whilst he is dependent for its execution upon countless hazards and others' co-operation.

The duke of Wellington has been censured for giving battle with a forest in his rear. His worshippers would have the circumstance advantageous to him. It is obvious to the plainest understanding, with the knowledge of the forest of Soignies, that it must have embarrassed the most orderly, and proved ruinous to a precipitate retrograde movement. But a victorious general may smile at the reproach of not having made it his paramount object to secure a retreat. The duke of Wellington, it is admitted on all sides, placed brave men in a position where they could best fight. His *coup-d'œil*, physical and moral, — of the field of battle, and of its incidents, — was comprehensive, steady, and sagacious; during the engagement he was active, prudent, decisive, and brave, — inspiring courage and confidence by his self-possession and personal contempt of danger. He may be entitled to a place with Eugene and Marlborough — minds of such stature as every age might and generally does produce; but it would be a vain effort of impotent adulation to rank him with Hannibal, Cæsar, and Napoleon. His career has been brilliant, and pro-

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tourists by a Flemish peasant, who took upon himself the lucrative functions of cicerone at Waterloo, have been repeated and reiterated in print, and with general credit in England. They were the common jest of Brussels at the time; and the shrewd, or as he was called, intelligent peasant, asked pardon of God and man for his impostures on his death-bed.

ductive of great results; but still he may call himself, the fortunate, like Sylla*, rather than the great.

* Sylla, to manifest his conviction of the extent to which fortune governs success, took the name of *Faustus*, and gave it to his son.

CHAP. XXIII.

1815.

THE duke of Wellington's despatches, dated the 19th, from the field of Waterloo, reached London late on the night of the 21st of June. A result, surpassing the most sanguine hopes, was hailed with boundless joy, whilst it clothed every family in the United Kingdom with mourning. The thanks of parliament and a public monument to the duke of Wellington and the army, were voted by acclamation on the following day. "The splendour and importance of the victory," said lord Lansdowne, with great felicity, in the house of lords, "almost stifle every feeling of individual sorrow, and make us regard the fate of the brave who fell as that of men *quos nefas est lugere.*" A grant of 200,000*l.* was voted to purchase an estate, and build a mansion for the duke of Wellington, as a memorial of his country's gratitude. The thanks of parliament were at the same time voted to field-marshal Blucher and the Prussian army. An East India director took occasion to move the thanks of the house of commons to the duke of York. His motion, after some objections of form, was agreed to; and a sycophant lawyer proposed a similar vote to the prince regent. "Who," he asked, "had rendered the army efficient? the

prince regent, by restoring the duke of York to the Horse Guards. Who had gained the battle of Waterloo? the prince regent, by giving the command of the army to the duke of Wellington." The ministers, however, had the grace to over-rule this learned person's exuberant servility.

Napoleon, with the resources of his genius and of France, might still rally, and at least protract the war. Further accounts were expected in England with mingled anxiety and curiosity. His misfortunes rapidly accumulated. Having made a fruitless effort to check the Prussians at Genappe on the night of the 18th, he lost the remainder of his artillery with his personal baggage, re-crossed the Sambre on the morning of the 19th, and continued his route through Phillipville to Laon. He made instant dispositions for the safety of this great arsenal; expedited orders for the corps of the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the West, to bear upon Paris by forced marches; completed the bulletin of his last battle, which he had already sketched on his way; left Soult to collect the scattered wreck of Waterloo, and took post for Paris, which he reached on the morning of the 21st of June.

"He received me," says Lavalette, "with an

* In adopting this course, he is stated by one of his secretaries to have yielded to the representations of the duke of Bassano, and the other persons about him. "Eh bien," s'écriat-il; "puisque vous le jugez nécessaire, j'irai à Paris. Mais je suis persuadé que vous me faites faire une sottise. Ma vraie place est ici: je pourrais y diriger ce qui se passera à Paris, et mes frères feraient le reste." *Mémoires de F***.* (*Fleury de Chaboulon.*)

epileptic laugh; cried, 'Oh, my God! Oh, my God!' with his eyes turned up to the heavens, paced the room several times, and became tranquil."

His first act was to assemble a council. "To save the country," said he, "the two chambers shall invest me with a temporary dictatorship, and I will rejoin the army to repair our disasters." The ministers knew the temper of the chamber of representatives, and hung down their heads in silence. He pressed them to speak freely. Carnot, the first who spoke, proposed to sound the old tocsin of the republic; declare the country in danger; call upon all Frenchmen to arm against the foreigner; place the capital in a state of siege; retire in the last extremity beyond the Loire, and, entrenched there, re-organise the army, and raise all France. This honest, resolute, and wise counsel was over-ruled by the traitorous suggestions of Fouché, and the false prudence of the other ministers.

The chamber of representatives in the mean time had met at 8 o'clock in the morning. Before the chair was yet taken, the members formed themselves into groups, according to their personal or political sympathies. The murmur of conversations in an earnest and ominous under-voice continued even after the president had taken his seat. It was rumoured that Napoleon was coming to dissolve the chambers and assume the dictatorship by a *coup d'état*. Lafayette, after a short but animating harangue, moved that the chamber should declare its sittings permanent, and any person attempting to dissolve or prorogue it a traitor to his country. The resolution was carried, transmitted instantly to

the chamber of peers, and adopted by them. This first step was fatal to Napoleon and to the independence of France. Savary says in his Memoirs, that Fouché had prepared it by artfully playing upon the shallow vanity and weakness of Lafayette.

The life of this celebrated person has been always pure; his motives have been always disinterested. But his conduct has, in every great revolutionary crisis, fallen short of his reputation. The generosity of his sentiments, and even his personal bravery, evaporated in mere words. He has not in his long career from 1789 to 1830 left a single deeply graven trace of resolute, opportune, and decisive action. His ornamental patriotism has figured too little in the strife, and too much on the parade. He talked in this instance of liberty, when the question was national independence, without which there can be no political liberty,—scarcely any political virtue,—and had the imbecility to suppose that he and a few other talkers would be allowed to choose a government of their fashion, when the duke of Wellington was advancing to the heart of France at the head of his army, with Louis XVIII. in his baggage train.

Napoleon regarded this resolution as a usurpation of sovereignty. He however sent a message by his ministers, with his brother Lucien, a man of energy and talent, as extraordinary commissioner, at their head. The day passed in interchanges of communications and angry disputes. "Ah," said Napoleon, "like the degenerate race of the lower empire, they dispute whilst the enemy is at the gate." Nothing remained for him but to trample upon the chamber, or abdicate the crown. His

advisers in whom he had most confidence recommended the alternative; and at night, on the 21st of June, he abdicated in favour of his son.

On the morning of the 22d, the act of abdication, dictated by Napoleon, and written by his brother Lucien, was presented to both chambers, which respectively sent deputations "to thank him for the noble sacrifice which he had made to the independence and happiness of the nation." Napoleon recommended his son to the peers, but received the representatives with contemptuous indifference. "I wish," said he, "my abdication may promote the happiness of France; but I do not hope it. You have lost in pulling down the monarchy the time which might have been employed in placing France in a situation to crush the enemy." The two chambers accepted the abdication generally, without an express recognition of his son; and appointed by ballot a provisional government, composed of Carnot, Fouché, Grenier, Caulaincourt, and Quinette. The two last were chosen by the peers. In the chamber of representatives, Carnot had 324 — Fouché, 295 — Lafayette, 142 — and marshal Macdonald 137 votes. Thus it appears that Carnot, the representative of pure republicanism, had the majority over jacobinism in Fouché, constitutionalism in Lafayette, and the "stratocracy" in Macdonald. An express recognition of Napoleon II. was evaded through the intrigues of Fouché, and the secret views of the Orleanists.

The name of marshal Ney was omitted in the imperial bulletin of the battle of Waterloo. He had committed great, perhaps fatal, errors; but the

omission of his name was petty and unjust. He appeared in his place as a peer on the morning of the 22d, and presented a grossly distorted picture of the calamities of Waterloo, the state and force of the surviving troops, and the hopelessness of resistance. It was supposed and said that he was governed by the hope of obtaining his pardon from the Bourbons by this act of double or rather triple treason; but he was actuated only by blind resentment, and his natural impetuosity; and his assertions and manner were so extravagant as to indicate mental alienation. He was vehemently attacked by Labedoyere, who, rushing to the tribune, indirectly apostrophised him. "There are," said he, "in this assembly, generals who meditate new treasons. Woe to every traitor. Be his house rased, his family proscribed!"* General Drouot had a private explanation with Ney, and stated in the chamber, as the result, that Ney had admitted expressing himself obscurely, and having been misunderstood; in short, that he retracted, and authorised Drouot's explanation.

News of the abdication of Napoleon and the state of confusion at Paris, reached the duke of Wellington at Cambray, and marshal Blucher at Guise, on the 25th; and both advanced on the French capital. A diplomatic commission, consisting of Lafayette, Pontecoulant, Laforest, d'Argenson, Sebastiani, and Benjamin Constant (the last as secretary), was sent by the provisional government, to treat with the allies. They were instructed to urge that

* Ney and Labedoyere were, it will be remembered, the two first victims immolated by the Bourbons.

the allies, and England in particular, expressly disclaimed imposing a government on France; to stipulate the personal safety and inviolability of Napoleon beyond the French territory; and to appeal on this point to the personal generosity of the sovereigns. Lafayette and his brother commissioners having reached the Prussian head quarters at Laon on the 26th, were contemptuously refused admission to his presence by Blucher, who communicated with them only through his aides-de-camp, and informed them that as the first condition Napoleon should be given up. The commissioners had the utter baseness to listen patiently to this condition, and to report to the provisional government the necessity of holding the person of Napoleon in safe keeping. Lafayette was still more dishonoured in this than his colleagues. It was Napoleon who released him from the prison of Olmutz.

A second commission, composed of Messrs. Andreossi, Valence, Boissy d'Anglas, Flaugergues, and Bernardiere, was sent to negotiate an armistice with the allies. The allied generals answered that no suspension of arms would be granted whilst Napoleon Bonaparte was in Paris, and his person free. In the mean time the French army, mustering 75,000 men, rallied under the walls of Paris, and was placed under the command of marshal Davoust, minister of war. Soult, ambitious and unscrupulous, but a man of decided capacity and energy, had been deprived of the command by the provisional government, and succeeded by Grouchy, who took the first opportunity of resigning a trust to which he found himself unequal. The chamber of repre-

sentatives addressed to the army a proclamation full of idle and ridiculous bravadoes, and placed Paris in a state of siege. Napoleon had retired to Malmaison at the suggestion of Fouché, and made up his mind to seek an asylum in England. "Like Themistocles," said he, "I will throw myself on the hospitality of my great enemy,—the British people." This idea took such possession of his imagination, and he repeated it to others and to himself so incoherently, that Sièyes exclaimed, after leaving his presence, "*L'Empereur est fou.*" Some persons, who were more correctly acquainted with the spirit of English law and government as affecting foreigners, decided him in favour of America; and he made application for two frigates, then lying at Rochfort, to convey him thither. This did not suit the views of the provisional government, or rather of Fouché, who put off his departure under various pretences, and at last appointed over him a guard under the command of general Becker. The object of Fouché was, according to some, that Napoleon should fall into the hands of the allies; according to others, that he should be surprised, and killed by the Prussians, who were already at Compiègne. The contiguity of the enemy inflamed the courage and ambition of Napoleon. The ascendant of his character survived his power, and he persuaded general Becker his gaoler to convey from him to the provisional government a letter, containing an offer to resume the command of the army as general, and take advantage of the rash advance of Blucher:—"Tell them," said he, "I will crush the Prussians, and then retire." He explained his plan

with such contagious fervour that Becker entered into his views warmly and instantly. Carnot was of opinion to accept his offer, and trust to his genius, fortune, and good faith. Fouché, like the noted duke of Lauderdale in Scotland, and another ermined buffoon who died recently in Ireland, combined the love of jesting with the thirst of blood, — he laughed at the proposal, and told Becker, with an expression of trivial pleasantry, that his prisoner was flown, and already haranguing the troops. Becker found Napoleon waiting his return, and ready to mount his horse, already saddled for the field, on the supposition that his offer would be accepted, but without the slightest intention to take advantage of the absence of his keeper and violate his pledge. Fouché became alarmed at his contiguity to the French troops, and the consequent possibility of his placing himself, or their placing him at their head. He therefore gave the necessary orders, and Napoleon was permitted to leave France. Preparations for his departure commenced early on the morning of the 29th of June. The false, the dastardly, and the ungrateful had fallen off: — Malmaison presented a spectacle of indescribable desolation and sorrow: — the mother, sister, and other relatives of Napoleon, wept and sobbed around him, whilst he employed himself in reading, or appearing to read the "American Farmer's Calendar *:" he occasionally raised his head to console his mother by saying, "No, my mother, it is not so bad as you think — it is not so bad." An old dependent on his

* He purposed going to the United States.

bounty, who had known him in his youth, presented himself, to solicit a last succour; the lord of nations and their monarchs, found himself without the means to comply, his fortitude forsook him; and exclaiming, "It is too much, it is too much," he gave way to his emotion:—this scene is referred to on the authority of the celebrated tragedian Talma, who witnessed it, and who maintained and avowed a generous faith even to the memory of his illustrious protector and friend.

At five o'clock in the evening of the 29th of June, Napoleon took leave of Malmaison for ever.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1815.

The provisional government, on the 30th of June, again solicited an armistice through marshal Davoust. Napoleon, they urged, was now removed from the scene, and the sole condition insisted on by the allies fulfilled. The duke of Wellington referred them to marshal Blucher, who returned to Davoust the following reply: — "We pursue our victory. God has given us the means and the will. Take care what you are about. Do not plunge one city more in misery and desolation. You well know what would be the conduct of the exasperated soldier if your capital were taken by assault. Would you load yourself with the curses of Paris as well as of Hamburgh? In Paris only can an armistice be safely concluded."

This humiliating refusal, conveying a personal as well as public insult to Davoust, in the allusion to Hamburgh, which he had defended pertinaciously in the preceding year, made the chamber of representatives sensible at last of the folly of their expectations. An express acknowledgment of the son of Napoleon was hitherto evaded. It now appeared that nothing remained but unconditional, abject submission, or an appeal to arms. The

latter was decided on. A rallying cry became necessary; and commissioners, wearing the tricolor scarf of the republic, were sent to the army in the name of Napoleon II. The troops echoed the name of the young emperor with enthusiasm, and forwarded to the chamber of representatives an address vehemently repudiating the Bourbons. The representatives in reply protested as strongly against the Bourbons, and appealed to the public declarations of the allies that France should be permitted to choose her government. "Napoleon," said they, "is removed from us. His son is called to the empire by the constitutions of the state. The coalesced sovereigns know this. The war, then, must terminate, *or the promises of kings are vain.*" Blucher and Wellington, regardless of this grave alternative, moved rapidly upon Paris. A battle was expected under the walls of the capital. But the representatives had broken the sword as well as the sceptre of France. After some skirmishes of cavalry, the Prussians occupied St. Germain, Versailles, and St. Cloud. Two councils of war, the one under the auspices of Fouché, in Paris, the other of Davoust, at the French head-quarters of Villette, resolved, with considerable difference of opinion, that Paris was indefensible. The deciding majority consisted of marshals surcharged with wealth, titles, and years, in whom patriotism, ambition, and the desire of glory had given way to the love of luxurious grandeur, vanity, and repose. The more active and aspiring officers, who had ambition and reputation, without yet reaching the highest rank, formed the minority.

Davoust, in pursuance of this military decision, to which he was a party, once more requested of the Prussian general Zieten a suspension of arms to consider the terms of the surrender of Paris. The answer of the Prussian was an aggravated reiteration of insult and contempt. "I dare not," said he, "even mention such a request to marshal Blucher; *but if the deputies of the government declare to my aide-de-camp* that both Paris and the French army are ready to surrender, I will speak to the marshal." The insulting Prussian, like the Gaul, threw his sword into the scale; but Davoust and the provisional government, degraded and despicable, crouched in silence before the conqueror, and appealed to the duke of Wellington. Paris, after some further supplicatory negotiation, was surrendered to the allies, whilst the French army retired behind the Loire.

Two articles of the capitulation should be borne in mind. The eleventh declares that "public properties, with the exception of those which have reference to war, shall be respected:" the twelfth, that "the inhabitants, and, in general, all individuals in the capital, shall continue to enjoy their liberty and rights without being molested or called to account relative to the functions which they occupy, or may have occupied, their conduct, or their political opinions."

The capitulation was signed at St. Cloud, and made public in Paris on the 3d of July. It produced a ferment through the capital. Davoust and the provisional government were denounced as traitors; but the courageous patriotism of the

Parisians confined itself to these menacing denunciations, or evaporated in them. Affecting still a ridiculous show of deliberation and authority, the chamber of representatives demanded of the allies the acknowledgment of Napoleon II., pursuant to their declarations. Fouché began to take off the mask. He informed his colleagues and the chamber that the allied sovereigns acknowledged none but Louis XVIII., who would make his solemn entry into Paris on the following day, and that the provisional government was dissolved. The chamber of representatives now began to discuss with ludicrous gravity a bill of rights, which should be dictated to Louis XVIII. as the condition of his re-ascending the throne; and made a solemn declaration that they would maintain the post which the nation had assigned them. "We are here," said Manuel, repeating the memorable expression of Mirabeau, "by the will of the people, and nothing but bayonets shall remove us." The value of such expressions depends wholly upon the occasion. That which was sublime from the lips of Mirabeau in 1789 was ridiculous from those of Manuel in 1815. The representatives soon separated for that day, but came next morning, in number about a hundred, to re-assemble in their hall of sitting, found it occupied as a military post by the Prussians, and went away objects of derision rather than of pity or respect, to record an impotent protest at the house of the president Lanjuinais.

Louis XVIII. made his entry into Paris escorted for the second time, to the throne of France by foreign bayonets, on the 8th of July. The hired

or hypocritical vociferations with which he was saluted could not conceal from him his utter debasement as a sovereign. He found the Prussians bivouacked in the court of the Tuileries, and obtained their removal only by abject prayers. One of the many noble works of Napoleon was the bridge of Jena, over the Seine. Blucher commenced operations for blowing up this monument of a battle which had been disastrous to Prussia. The duke of Wellington was appealed to, but would not interfere, or could not prevail with Blucher to desist. Louis XVIII. requested to be informed when the match was to be applied, in order that he might place himself upon the centre arch and be blown up with it. This canting gasconade would have had no effect upon Blucher, if the emperor of Russia had not opportunely arrived in Paris. At his intercession the bridge was spared, but newnamed, by a royal ordonnance, that of the Invalids.

The wretched Louis, powerless for all but the vengeance over which he was brooding, reconstituted his cabinet, with Fouché as minister of police. This noted personage appears to have been the most immoral of mankind. He was a sort of utilitarian in politics. The words "right" and "wrong" were banished from his vocabulary. The deepest hue of crime in human action was indifferent to him. He asked himself only whether it was or not what he called "a fault." Fouché shed blood in the revolution with the recklessness of a jacobin; but cherished his own life with what Madame Roland called "the poltroonery of a Capuchin;" and saved it through so many wrecks of party by

his cowardly but sagacious sense of coming danger, his promptitude in betraying, and his dexterity in intriguing.

Upon the near approach of Louis XVIII. to the capital, Fouché openly avowed his traitorous correspondence with the duke of Wellington, and was rewarded with the ministry of police, through the grateful patronage of the duke, aided by lord Castlereagh, who had just arrived at the British headquarters. Louis XVIII., a suffering pitiable mass of gastronomic corpulency, disease, and years, was scarcely recovered from the fatigue of his ignominious procession in the rear of the British army, when he issued two tables of proscription. The first, denouncing capital punishment, contained nineteen names, among which were Ney, Labedoyère, Grouchy, Lavallette, the two Lallemands, Lefebvre Desnouettes, and Savary. The second denounced exile against thirty-nine persons, among whom were Carnot, Soult, Maret, St. Jean d'Angely; and below the signature of Louis figured that of Fouché, jacobin, regicide, conspirator, traitor, duke of Otranto, and minister of police. Carnot, upon receiving Fouché's official intimation to quit Paris in three days, addressed to him the following laconic note:—"*Où veux-tu que j'aille, traître?*" Fouché as laconically replied, "*Où tu voudras, imbécille;*" plainly intimating, in the triumph of successful villany, that an honest man and an idiot were synonymous terms.

Several of the French marshals had observed a calculating recreant neutrality during the hundred days. After bowing Louis XVIII. across the frontier,

they retired to their estates and awaited the event. Two of the least degraded, or most politic of this class, St. Cyr and Macdonald, were appointed; the former minister of war, the latter commander-in-chief of the French army, in place of Davoust. The minister's first act was to order, and the commander's to execute, the disbanding of the French army, in pursuance of an ordonnance of Louis XVIII., dated Ghent, March 23d. Among the many instances of selfishness and demoralisation which disgraced France during the trying periods of 1814 and 1815, it is not the least striking that two French generals of reputation were found willing to pass the French army under the yoke of an ordonnance, distressing and degrading as the *furcæ caudinæ* of the Samnites.

Napoleon, in the mean time, was a prisoner on his way to the rock of St. Helena. He left Malmaison, it has been stated, on the 29th of June, and arrived at Rochfort on the 7th of July, with the intention of proceeding to the United States. Two dominant ideas haunted his imagination from the moment when he abdicated to his arrival at the coast. One was, that he had missed his destiny by not remaining in Egypt, and founding a new empire in the East. *J'ai manqué à ma destinée!* was his constant exclamation to others and to himself. The second was the idea already mentioned, which as frequently escaped him, of throwing himself upon the hospitality of England, as Themistocles had thrown himself upon that of Persia. On the 8th of July he embarked with his suite, including Montholon and Bertrand, with their wives and families, Lascasas,

Lallemand, Gourgaud, and Savary, on board two French frigates, and was about to sail for America next day, when a British fleet was observed cruising before the roadstead of the Isle of Aix. The duke of Wellington had refused the provisional government a safe-conduct for him; the English cruisers could not be eluded, and he came to the resolution of placing himself voluntarily in the hands of the British admiral. After some previous negotiation, Napoleon was received on board the Bellerophon by Captain Maitland, on the 14th of July. His first step was to address the following letter to the prince regent:—"A mark to the factions which distract my country, and to the enmity of the greatest powers of Europe, I have terminated my political career, and I come like Themistocles to seat myself at the hearth of the British people. I place myself under the protection of their laws, which I claim of your royal highness, as the most powerful, the most constant, and the most generous of my enemies."

General Gourgaud, whom Napoleon charged with this letter, to be placed by him, if possible, in the prince regent's own hands, was not permitted to land, and the letter was returned; but a duplicate of it was forwarded to the British government. Napoleon, in the mean time, was brought over in the Bellerophon off Torbay, and thence to Plymouth Sound. Multitudes assembled from considerable distances to obtain a sight of the conqueror of so many nations, reduced to seek protection under the only flag of Europe which had never been lowered before him. Boats, crowded with spectators,

covered the sea,—forming a vast and picturesque flotilla. His destination was the subject of much doubt and controversy, during several days which he passed in Plymouth Sound. Was he to receive a safe-conduct for the United States, or permission to reside in England, or was he to be sent a prisoner to St. Helena? His own expectation appears to have been, that he should be permitted to live in England. Two courses were open to the regent and his cabinet; the one generous, the other secure. They made option of the latter. Sir H. Bunbury, an under secretary, officially communicated to Napoleon, that he and his suite, restricted to a certain number, would be sent prisoners of war to St. Helena. Lallemand and Savary were excluded, on the ungenerous ground of their proscription in France. Napoleon protested vehemently against this treatment, and addressed a letter of remonstrance to the admiral, lord Keith. He was, however, virtually forced on board the Northumberland, and set sail in that ship, on the 8th of August, for St. Helena; leaving behind him the following protest, which he had written on board the Bellerophon, when he was informed of his destination:—

"I here solemnly protest, in the face of heaven and men, against the violation of my most sacred rights, in the disposal by force of my person and liberty. I am the guest of England. Once seated on board the Bellerophon, I was under the protection of the hearth of the British people. If the government, in giving orders to the captain of the Bellerophon to receive me and my suite, sought only to decoy me, it has forfeited its honour, and tarnished its flag. Should this act be consummated,

let the English talk no more to Europe of their good faith, their laws, their liberty. British faith will be lost in the hospitality of the Bellerophon. I appeal to history. History will say that an enemy, who made war for twenty years upon the English people, came in his ill fortune, of his own accord, in search of an asylum under their laws. What more shining proof could he give of his esteem and confidence? But how did England answer such magnanimity as this? She feigned to hold out a hospitable hand to that enemy, and when he surrendered himself in good faith, she immolated him!"*

Why, it was asked, did not Napoleon play the Roman with his own hand? This reproach was thrown upon him, in France, by those who themselves trembled whilst he continued to breathe, or who would consult the wallowing ease, and satiate the craven vengeance of the Bourbons and emigrants; in England, by a class of creatures whose canting hypocrisy would have charged it upon him as the crowning of his misdeeds, or whose pusillanimous bigotry would consign the suicide to the desecrations of interment in the highway.

The disposal of his person by the British government of that day is an open question, which has been, and will be, variously judged. It will be condemned by the fearlessly generous,—vindicated by

* Sir Walter Scott suggests a reason, curious only as coming from him, why Napoleon should have thought himself fortunate: it is that as an *English* prisoner of war his life was safe; whereas any other of the high allies would make "quick conveyance" of him by secret assassination.

the unscrupulously prudent; but there is something unequivocally despicable and ridiculous in the petty mortification of affecting to deny that he had been an emperor. Blucher acted consistently with the blind passions of a barbarian, when he thought, by blowing up a bridge, to obliterate from the page of history the memory of a great battle; but what could have possessed British ministers—even such ministers as lords Bathurst and Castlereagh—when they set up their imbecility, against the annals of a memorable age, which will record Napoleon a crowned monarch, warrior, and statesman; a tyrant and conqueror it is true, but also a benefactor of mankind? In fine, Napoleon was marked out for sacrifice by a confederacy of crowned heads; not because he was a tyrant, or even a conqueror, but because, as lord Holland is said to have expressed it, he wanted a royal pedigree; because he would establish in his person a perilous innovation,—the supremacy of mind and of the popular power. He fell, perhaps, because the time for new reigning dynasties in any enlightened and independent nation is gone by. The popular power seems disposed to manifest itself in another form, which cannot be placed beyond the pale of society and humanity, conquered in a single battle, or carried captive to a distant island. Whether it will break the thread, or await the euthanasia of the existing royal races, would be a curious rather than profitable enquiry.

The French people, it was said, were favourable to the house of Bourbon, and the army alone had restored Bonaparte. That army now no longer existed, Napoleon was removed, his adherents were

proscribed, Louis XVIII. was seated on his throne, with his whole machinery of government fully organised; did the allies withdraw their armies, and leave him to the loving-kindness of his people? They did not commit a folly so egregious. It was arranged, or rather imposed by treaty, that sixteen fortresses of France should be occupied, for five years, by the allies, with 150,000 troops of the different nations, under the command of the duke of Wellington as generalissimo. But, in adopting this necessary precaution, they gave the lie both to their own declarations and to the declamations of their partisans. They practically avowed, that they had forced upon France the yoke of a family abhorrent to the French nation.

It may be inferred from the conduct of the allies, and even from their language, that Louis XVIII. was restored, not from affection or esteem for him or his family, so much as with a view to punish and humiliate the French. The emperor of Russia made no secret of his contempt for the Bourbons; and it appeared to be the policy of the allies to render Louis — already hated and despised — still more despicable and hateful. The supreme magistracy of a state was never more utterly debased. An usurper, so called, would have died rather than submit to the public and personal degradations of this "legitimate king." He had to repeat his entreaties to the Prussian general for the removal of the Prussian bivouacs from beneath his palace windows, and for permission to enjoy the hollow and paltry pageant of a sentry in French uniform at his door. The government of his capital, mu-

nicipal and military, was exercised by the Prussians, who, under the name of requisitions and quarters, indulged in all the excesses of military rapacity and insolence. Complaining magistrates and deputations could not even obtain access to the Tuileries by the Carrousel, whilst the mock monarch was communing on the other side of the palace, with a ragged group of both sexes earning a daily pittance by dancing and singing under his window, at the command of the police.

But that which stung the French to agony, and made them vent openly their impotent execration upon Louis XVIII., the Bourbons, and the allies, was the sight of the Louvre despoiled of the immortal remains of ancient sculpture, and the congregated *chefs-d'œuvre* of the Italian and Flemish schools. It was upon this occasion that the duke of Wellington, in a letter to lord Castlereagh, avowed the design of giving the French "a great moral lesson." The rapacious and insolent domination with which the French exercised the right of conquest upon other countries merited a reprisal. But a truly moral lesson cannot be given by fraud and violence, even though committed in retaliation. They who, professing respect to a sacred principle, solemnly abjured the intention of imposing a government on France, and, when they had obtained all the advantages of this abjuration, flagrantly violated their pledge; they who bound themselves, by express convention, to respect public and private property, and yet acknowledged no right over it but that of the stronger,—talked of morality with a bad grace.

Blucher, it is true, did not blow up the obnoxious

bridge; but what credit is due to a robber on the highway because he happens to be deterred or dissuaded by a superior accomplice?

The treasures of the Louvre were obtained, it was said, by the right of conquest, and might be resumed by it. This is a fallacy in the envelope of a loose form of expression. They were obtained for the most part by express articles of convention or capitulation, dictated, it is true, to the weak by the strong, but still accepted whilst an alternative remained. To justify the stripping of the Louvre an express exception should have been made to the twelfth article of the capitulation of St. Cloud.

The duke of Wellington, indeed, states, in his letter to lord Castlereagh, that the provisional government demanded, and the allied generals refused, an express guarantee for the museum of the Louvre. But of what avail are a mere verbal demand and refusal, if the specific object comes fairly within the operation of a general article expressly agreed to? The duke's letter is, in many parts, a bad pleading, extorted from him by his sense of the obloquy to which he had exposed himself. It is deficient in a quality which should be the last to fail him, — the frankness of a soldier. Justifying his particular interference on behalf of the king of the Netherlands, he says, — "Meanwhile the Prussians had *obtained from his majesty* (Louis XVIII.) not only all the pictures belonging to Prussia Proper, but also those which belonged to the Prussian territory on the left bank of the Rhine." The real fact was, that Blucher, instead of having "obtained them from his majesty," sent a Prussian sergeant's guard

to the house of Denon, the keeper, for the key of the museum. That true lover of his country and the arts, refused, at the threatened peril of being sent a prisoner to a Prussian fortress; upon which the Prussian general forced open the door, and took away such pictures as he chose to claim for the galleries and churches of Berlin, Potsdam, and Cologne. The duke of Wellington, as if resolved not to be outdone by Blucher, and even to outdo him, subjected British officers and troops to the gratuitous odium of protecting the spoliations in favour of Holland and Belgium; and even of aiding the Austrians when they made their claim in the repartition of the spoil. The 95th British fusileers stood under arms along the gallery of the Louvre, and English officers of engineers were employed in taking down those bronze horses of Lysippus, which have followed in the train of so many conquerors, from Corinth to Rome, from Rome to Constantinople, from Constantinople to Venice, from Venice to Paris, and, in 1815, back from the square of the Carrousel to that of St. Mark.

The French, during these operations, were excluded from the Louvre. In spite, however, of every effort of the foreign troops stationed under arms, and acting as a police, the Parisians assembled round the scene in groups and crowds, presenting a spectacle, beyond description and imagination, of the popular passions exasperated to fury, but controlled and caged under the mastery of a superior force. Manhood and beauty, youth and age, from the artist and amateur down to the very populace of this capital of European

civilisation, cried and cursed, gnashed their teeth and tore their hair, when they saw these treasures of art and trophies of victory torn from them. One redeeming circumstance might suggest itself, at least to an uninterested stranger, in the idea that the monuments of her departed greatness, and her sole remaining glory, were returning to Italy.

Louis XVIII. was thus treated as a mere animal being, whose desires went no further than the brute indulgences of a throne. It was part of the great "moral lesson" to be given the French people. Upon the same principle, but much less justifiably, he was tolerated, if not encouraged, in the exercise of his plausible hypocrisy and heartless vengeance. Arrests, imprisonments, executions, and assassinations covered France with terror and mourning. Among the more conspicuous victims were Labedoyère, Brune, Ney, and Lavallette. Labedoyère was the first sacrificed. He had made his arrangements to share the exile of Napoleon. The relatives of his wife, who were royalist courtiers, dissuaded him with the assurance that he should be forgiven by Louis XVIII.; and their motive was said to have been the base one of making the fallen emperor feel desolation and desertion. Labedoyère loved France, and especially Paris, with the passion of the younger Foscari for Venice. He joined the army of the Loire, left it to visit Paris under an assumed name, was arrested, put upon his trial, stopped by the judges in his defence, and condemned. The same persons who had fatally dissuaded him from leaving France, practised again upon the natural instinct of prolonging the sense of life, and his passionate ten-

derness for a wife and only infant child, with a renewed assurance that his life should be spared. They thus wrung from his human weakness, in despite of truth and conscience, a sort of eulogy on the Bourbons and their government. His wife and mother, relying on the assurances given them, threw themselves on their knees before the carriage-wheels of Louis XVIII., and he drove on. They grasped the duchess of Angoulême by her garments, which were disengaged from the suppliants with loyal horror by her attendant ladies. Labedoyère, in the forenoon of the same day, was brought out and shot in the plain of Grenelle; in the evening, Louis XVIII. supped, the duchess of Angoulême prayed, and the frivolous Parisians amused themselves on the boulevards, in the coffee-houses, and in the theatres.

The tables of proscription, of which mention has already been made, were spurned as insufficient by the vindictive fury and fanaticism of the court, and of its partisans in the provinces. The French protestants of the south were persecuted with fire and sword. Marshal Brune was assassinated by a band of ruffians in open day at Avignon, and five years elapsed before his widow obtained the barren justice of proving the crime without punishing the criminal.

There appeared hesitation and delay in bringing Ney to trial; but on the part of the ministers, not of the court. Fouché, who invented the designation "ultra-royalists," addressed reports to the king upon the dangers to which this party was exposing him. Talleyrand and Fouché both became afraid of being

themselves ultimately reached by the system of political epuration. Both were equally abhorred; Fouché as a jacobin regicide by the royalists; Talleyrand as a renegade bishop by the clergy and devotees. They were especially odious to the duchess of Angoulême, and the ministry was broken up through her influence. Talleyrand, Fouché, and St. Cyr were respectively succeeded by the duc de Richelieu, an emigrant; Decazes, a minion of the imperial court, who had been chamberlain to the mother of Napoleon, and was now installed the favourite of Louis XVIII.; and Clarke, duc de Feltre, who had attended the Bourbons to Ghent. The new ministry, by way of checking the royalist assassins and incendiaries of the south, gently requested them "not to anticipate the action of justice and the law upon state criminals," and published one of those tyrant amnesties in which the exceptions devour the rule, so as to constitute real proscriptions. The faculties of speech and writing were exercised under the most severe and arbitrary penalties; and the ordinary judicature gave way to monstrous tribunals called prevotal courts.

Such, very imperfectly sketched, was the duke of Wellington's "moral lesson." But a material portion of it still remained, — the execution of marshal Ney. The tergiversations of that unfortunate person were so outrageous as to subject him to imputations of the basest treachery. It appears, however, from his whole career, and from the testimony of those who knew him, that he was not treacherous, but rash, violent, and unenlightened.

After several weeks' imprisonment, he was put upon his trial, before a council of marshals. The court was formed with great reluctance on the part of the members, and, after hearing the case, declared itself incompetent. The royalists became furious at this disappointment, and clamoured anew for his blood. He was handed over to be tried by the chamber of peers. The duc de Richelieu had the reputation of moderate talents and humane dispositions; but so inhumanising is the effect of court passions and party spirit, that in addressing the chamber of peers, constituted as a high criminal tribunal, he demanded the blood of Ney in a tone of sanguinary and brutal rage.

"It is," said he, "*in the name of Europe*, that the government comes to conjure the chamber." From this appeal it was immediately and naturally concluded that the blood of Ney was demanded by the foreign ministers, and almost the whole odium was thrown on the duke of Wellington. Ney rested his defence upon the capitulation, or convention of Paris, and addressed a note in quadruplicate to the ministers of the four great powers. This note, signed with the name of Ney, argues that the convention of St. Cloud was entered into with marshals Wellington and Blucher, acting on behalf of the allies; that Louis XVIII. was proved by the treaty of the 30th of March, and several official declarations, to be one of those allies, and consequently bound by it; and that his (Ney's) case came clearly within the 12th article, which says, "Persons and private property shall be respected: the inhabitants, and in general all the individuals who are

in the capital, shall continue to enjoy their rights and liberty, without being molested or sought after for any thing relating to the functions they occupy, or shall have occupied, *their conduct and their political opinions.*" The duke of Wellington returned the following answer:—

"I have had the honour of receiving the note which you addressed to me on the 13th instant, relative to the operation of the capitulation of Paris in your case. The capitulation of Paris of the 3d July last was made between the commander-in-chief of the allied and Prussian armies, on the one part, and the Prince d'Eckmuhl, commander-in-chief of the French army, on the other, and related exclusively to the military occupation of Paris. The object of the 12th article was to prevent any measure of severity, under the military authority of those who made it, towards any persons in Paris, on account of any offices they had filled, or any conduct or political opinion of theirs; but it never was intended, and never could be intended, to prevent either the existing French government, under whose authority the French commander-in-chief must have acted, or any French government which might succeed to it, from acting, in this respect, as it might seem fit."

Waving the argument, it is hard to read, without disgust, the abrupt indifference with which one soldier, at the summit of prosperity and power, answers the appeal of another, from a dungeon, with a capital accusation suspended over him by relentless enemies.

Two notes in rejoinder were put forward on behalf of Ney. The first, relative to the capitulation, says, " Capitulations or conventions, concluded by commanders-in-chief, are not momentary and passing conventions, but are every where recognised as permanent engagements. Treaties thus formed by their representatives cannot be arbitrarily changed by governments, particularly to the prejudice of the security, of the property, the liberty, and the life of the party guaranteed by the original capitulation. No possession whatever acquired by the capitulation can be disposed of without fulfilling the conditions under which the acquisition has been made. A government, in yielding any possession whatever, cannot disengage itself from the guarantee of a capitulation; and the obligation, not being discontinued, the oppressed do not the less preserve the right of claiming its protection against subsequent violations of their personal security. *Civil or military persons, accused of political offences, covered by a capitulation, cannot be delivered up to be tried by a new government, nor even by that which is re-established in its rights.*..... The only deviation occurred at Naples, where the capitulation made by captain Foote was not respected by lord Nelson, and where the party surrendered, on the faith of the English government, to the re-established Neapolitan government, was persecuted and executed by the latter government; but lord Nelson pretended that captain Foote was not authorised to make a capitulation; and yet that odious transaction has cast a shade over the character of lord

Nelson; and it excited so much horror in England, that nothing but the eminent services of lord Nelson could have saved him from being the object of an accusation and judicial proceedings in parliament. .... The king of France cannot pretend that the capitulation is not binding on the grounds above stated. How can he seek to violate this single and most solemn of the articles, when with regard to the others, which are to the disadvantage of France, he has been compelled to lend himself to their rigorous fulfilment? The capitulation was concluded in the name of the allied powers, and the king of France, on the day of the capitulation, was only one member of the coalition, according to the terms of the declarations and proclamations of the coalesced powers, and in particular that of June 22d, signed by the duke of Wellington..... *It is essential to observe that the city of Paris has never been restored to the king; that it is now in the military occupation of the allies; and that no person can proceed beyond its environs without a passport, countersigned by the military commandant of the allies.*"

The second note relates to an interview which Madame Ney had with the duke of Wellington. Its brevity and compactness render it proper to give it entire. "The duke of Wellington, in a private audience granted yesterday (Nov. 13th) to Madame Ney, gave as the grounds for the disposition in which he was personally not to interfere at all in the trial of the marshal, that his majesty the king of France had not ratified the convention of the 3d July; that

the stipulation written in the 12th article expressed only the renunciation of the high powers, on their own account, of proceeding against any one in France for his conduct or political opinions; that they had nothing then to meddle with in the acts of the king's government. Madame la maréchale Ney cannot believe that this first opinion, manifested upon the 12th article of the convention of the 3d July, can be definitely maintained in the conference of the plenipotentiaries. In the attacks and invasion purely foreign of a conqueror, the enemy who penetrates into a country busies himself in nowise with the troubles that may have broken out in it; and it does not fall within the order of capitulations that those of a certain party shall not be proceeded against. It is, then, because in the present occurrence the war was special, and for the pacification of the interior, that they thought of stipulating it in terms of amnesty. The king, say they, has not ratified it; but the ratification has been sufficient, for the taking of possession followed from it. The condition of the besieged cannot be changed afterwards, unless things be re-established *in statu quo.* His highness has not sufficiently considered what ought to be essentially considered, that this 12th article was the subject of a discussion between the English and Prussian commissioners and the commissioners of the French army, *and that it was well understood that this stipulation took place on account of the king, and not on account of the allied armies,* who had no right whatever to act against such or such party.

That the article is consented to in the name and common interest of all the allied powers, an interest indivisible, and which the two treaties of the 13th and 25th of March designated as being principally that of his majesty the king of France. That it will not be meddling in the acts of the king's government to recall to his majesty engagements made in his name;—engagements which his ministers forget, which individuals proceeded against claim, and of which it becomes the dignity of the high powers that the effect should not be null. Finally, in all cases, since his highness allows that the high powers are at least bound themselves by a renunciation, *what ought they to think at being made to appear as conjuring and requiring the trial of marshal Ney?* Is it not the first thing they ought to do in such a conjuncture to disengage speedily the balance of criminal justice from this enormous weight?"

It is not easy to suppose, notwithstanding the evidence of this note, that the duke of Wellington argued diplomacy with a woman in despair.

The duke of Wellington, by way of replication, addressed a memorandum to the ministers of the allied powers. This second pleading merely reproduces his letter to the marshal already given, and refers to the sense in which the convention was understood by "the duke of Otranto," when he countersigned ordinances of proscription, and by Carnot, who casually referred to it in a printed defence of his conduct. As to Fouché, no one knew better than the duke of Wellington that he was at the moment a traitor. Carnot, in a letter to

a friend at Paris, written on hearing of the duke's appeal to him, admitted that, in the instructions to the negotiators, a military convention only was contemplated. The letter, which, like many other writings, serious and satirical, on the same subject, was circulated confidentially in Paris at the time, contained the following passage: — "We contemplated a military convention, but it was on the understanding that we should be at liberty to choose our government, or at least to make terms for the nation with the Bourbons; you, my lord duke, have had the bad faith (*déloyauté*) to impose a government on us in violation of your solemn proclaimed assurance. You faithlessly brought in the tyrant under cover of the convention; and you put the seal to your own dishonour by placing the foot of the tyrant and the executioner upon our necks."

Ney was at last brought to trial. One of the principal witnesses against him was the deserter Bourmont, who went over to the Prussians on the eve of the battle of Ligny. When Bourmont had given his evidence, Ney rose, and, looking him in the face, said, — "M. de Bourmont has prepared himself in his part: he thought that I should be disposed of like Labedoyère, and that we should never meet again. We are here, face to face. I appeal to M. de Bourmont before God, did he not approve the proclamation?" Bourmont was silent, but made a sign of dissent.

Ney's counsel no sooner touched on the convention than the court interdicted him, on the ground that "appealing to a convention with

foreigners was inconsistent with the dignity of the king of France." His advocate passed to another point. Ney, he said, was a native of Sarre-Louis, which had become Prussian territory by cession a few days before; he, therefore, was not amenable to the laws of France. The marshal started up, and exclaimed vehemently, "I am a Frenchman; I will die a Frenchman;" thanked his counsel for their zeal, forbade them to proceed, as his defence was not free, was condemned to death, and shot at nine o'clock on the following morning.

At the moment when Louis's dignity and independence of foreigners were thus acted upon as the ground of depriving Ney of his chief means of defence, those despicable judges knew that the king of France was escorted by foreign bayonets at every step from the frontier to the capital; that Paris was opened to him by this very convention; that Paris was at the moment when they spoke in the military occupation of those very foreigners, under a foreign military governor; and that without them he could not sit one hour upon the throne. Such of the peers as thought only of their vengeance were less infamous than the creatures who, under the base influences of favour or fear, stained their consciences with perjury and blood.

The case, as it affects the duke of Wellington, has been fairly stated on both sides, and the reader left to judge. The duke himself, when he reflects upon it, as assuredly he often does, may well exclaim "This is a sorry sight." Caraccioli, a man of untarnished honour and patriotism, is not for a

moment to be coupled with Ney; but Nelson had the melancholy excuse of acting under the influence of two abandoned and artful women.

The duke of Wellington is described as a man of kind and humane feelings. How is this to be reconciled with the unhappy affair of Ney? Is it that his head was turned, and his perceptions distorted by his sudden elevation—his heart hardened by the new ambition of politics as well as war, and by the communion and maxims of two veteran intriguers, notorious for regarding political morality as a jest to the wise? It was remarked at the time that he affected a sort of disdain for the conventions of social manners, and even of language. There is in his letter to lord Castlereagh a curious example of the latter. "A great deal," says he, "has lately been said here respecting the measures I have been obliged to adopt in order to obtain for the king of the Netherlands his paintings *and other things* out of the museum." Would it not be supposed that the writer was another Mummius, who would make the carriers responsible, in case of damage, for replacing the immortal master-pieces of Grecian art? But the man who affected this contemptuous negligence of style, as if style were a consideration beneath him, is said to be an ardent and enlightened admirer of sculpture and painting. Perhaps, in the affair of Ney, he thought he might contemn, not only manners and language, but human opinions and human feelings. If he thought so he was mistaken, and has discovered his mistake long since. The opinion of Europe was too

strong for him, as he himself said, in his letter, the armies of Europe were for the French people; and he has recently discovered, by the fate of his "order of the day" against reform, that he cannot run counter to the opinion of England with impunity.

The affair of Lavallette, rescued from the scaffold by the devoted affection of his wife, and by the resolute humanity of sir Robert Wilson, Mr. Bruce, and captain Hutchinson, is too well known to be more than glanced at. A rancorous feeling against the English was excited in Paris by the sacrifice of Ney. The generous hardihood of three * Englishmen rescuing a Frenchman from the jaws of death, by an enterprise of great skill and peril, changed, by an instantaneous re-action, national animosity into grateful admiration, among a people both volatile and susceptible in the extreme.

The domestic incidents of this year, during and after the marvellous episode of the hundred days, are few and, for the most part, unimportant. A considerable extension, and new gradation of the Order of the Bath were made by the prince regent, with the view to reward distinguished military and naval services. It was obviously suggested by the closer intercourse with foreign military systems, and condemned by many as a foppery quite alien to the English character. The censure, however, was

* There was a fourth; but the French police was unable to decipher his name in the letter of sir Robert Wilson, and he escaped discovery.

rather churlish than reasonable. The measure deserves unqualified commendation, with the sole exception of its being too jealously exclusive,— unlike that most powerful moral lever, the French Legion of Honour.

Parliament was deprived of one of its most distinguished members, and the country of one of its best and ablest patriots, under melancholy circumstances, which rendered the loss, public and private, more poignantly and deeply felt. Mr. Whitbread, after suffering for some time, under occasional despondency and delusions of imagination, died on the morning of the 6th of July by his own hand. As a public and private man he was one of the finest specimens which the country has produced of the democracy of England individualised. His eloquence, without ambition or studied grace, was prompt and vigorous; his views right-minded in every sense; his life and demeanour frank, simple, humane, disinterested, and, above all, independent. Lord Tavistock, in moving a new writ for Bedford on the occasion of his death, pronounced upon him a short, affecting, and truly eloquent eulogy. "Accustomed," said his friend, "to defend his opinions with earnestness and warmth, the energies of his powerful and comprehensive mind would not suffer in him the least approach to tameness and indifference; but no particle of animosity ever found a place in his breast; and, to adopt his own words on another mournful occasion, 'he never carried his political enmity beyond the threshold of this house.'"

The duke of Cumberland was married at Berlin,

in the early part of the year, to a daughter of the reigning duke of Mecklenburgh-Strelitz, niece of the queen of England, and widow of the prince of Salms. Twice married, she was divorced from one husband by law, from the other by death. The queen wrote a letter to her brother, the duke of Mecklenburgh, with assurances of a kind reception of the bride, his daughter, on her arrival in England. It proved, however, on the arrival of the duke and duchess of Cumberland, that the queen would not receive the lady either in private or at court. The queen's letter was published in the newspapers. Her partisans were, for a moment, confounded, but soon recovered sufficient effrontery to reply, that it was written by her as a sort of collusive compromise, to be shown in the German courts, upon an understanding that the duchess should not come to England. Pending this dispute, parliament was requested, by a message from the regent, to make an accession of 6000*l.* a year to the duke's income on his marriage. The proposed grant, after passing through several stages by small majorities, was ultimately thrown out by a majority of *one*, after some speeches by no means flattering to the duke of Cumberland.

The domestic vulgarities and family feuds of courts are among the most worthless matters of information or enquiry. Whether, therefore, the queen's motives for her animosity originated in certain gossiping tales of German court gallantry or scandal, or in the lady's having sacrificed the duke of Cambridge to the duke of Cumberland —a violent supposition, by the way, of the ca-

prices of the sex — may be left undecided. The demeanour of the duchess of Cumberland in this country has been, to say the least, unobtrusive and unimpeached; but it must be confessed that a disastrous fatality, — something inauspicious and indescribable, — attaches to the prince her husband.

CHAPTER XXV.

1816, 1817.

At the commencement of 1816 large military establishments still pressed heavily on the resources of England and other great European communities. But these armed masses were sedentary and idle. The spirit of conquest which gave them activity and employment was bound captive beyond the confines of Europe upon an island rock. Parliament was opened on the 1st of February by commission. The prince regent had shortly before been so seriously indisposed, that there were, for a moment, rumours of his death, and he was not yet sufficiently recovered to open the session in person. The speech consisted of triumphant congratulations on the brilliant success of his majesty's armies, the happy restoration of the Bourbons, the good understanding with his majesty's allies, the prospects of peace, and the assurance especially addressed to the house of commons "that the manufactures, commerce, and revenue of the United Kingdom were in a flourishing condition." In the house of lords, after some objections suggested, rather than urged, by lords Lansdowne, Holland, and Grosvenor, the address was unanimously agreed to. In the house of commons Mr. Brand (lord Dacre) moved,

by way of amendment, an addition to the address, pledging the government to an efficient reduction of the public burdens, and the house to an immediate enquiry into the state of the nation. Lord John Russell, who seconded the amendment, said that distress existed to such an extent as could neither be covered nor compensated by victories and trophies, and warned the country of an intention to continue the income tax in time of peace. The chancellor of the exchequer (Mr. Vansittart) excited some merriment, when, by way of proving the anxious attention of ministers to the state of the nation, he solemnly declared that the last was the busiest summer he had passed in his life. The amendment, after further discussion, was negatived, and the address adopted by a majority of 90 to 23.

On the bringing up of the report next day, the chancellor of the exchequer avowed his intention to continue the property tax in what he called a modified form.

Several treaties and conventions with foreign powers were immediately communicated to parliament. The most important was the treaty which provided that sixteen French fortresses on the northern and eastern frontier should be occupied by the allies with 150,000 men, for five years, at the cost of France, under the command of the duke of Wellington.

The memorable league called the Holy Alliance had been signed at Paris by the three sovereigns of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, in person, on the 26th of September, 1815, and promulgated by the chief

conspirator from St. Petersburgh on Christmas day. On the 9th of February Mr. Brougham moved that a copy of this convention be laid on the table of the house. He remarked upon the singularity of a treaty in which monarchs were the actual diplomatists; cited an expression of Voltaire, that "a colloquy of kings* boded no good to nations;" and especially observed, that the pious strain of the contracting parties in the document had an ominous coincidence with the vocabulary of the Empress Catherine, when she called upon the Poles, "as they loved their God, and kissing the cross of their Redeemer, to come unto her their tender mother," after she had just massacred 30,000 Poles at Warsaw, and driven 30,000 more forth upon the world. Lord Castlereagh refused to produce the treaty; said it was communicated to the prince regent the very first by the emperor Alexander, and approved, though not acceded to; wondered how any candid person could question the good faith and piety of the allies; and declared his solemn conviction that the alliance was one of "charity and peace." The majority of the house of commons acted upon his authority, or adop ted his views.

The following is the text of this momentous compact, comprised in the compass of a preamble, and three short articles:—

"In the name of the most holy and indivisible Trinity.

"Their majesties the emperor of Austria, the king of Prussia, and the emperor of Russia, having, in consequence of the great events which have marked

* L'abouchement des rois.

the course of the three last years in Europe, and especially of the blessings which it has pleased Divine Providence to shower down upon those states which place their confidence and their hope on it alone, solemnly declare, that the present act has no other object than to publish in the face of the whole world their fixed resolution, both in the administration of their respective states, and in their political relations with every other government, to take for their sole guide the precepts of that holy religion, — namely, the precepts of justice, Christian charity, and peace, which, far from being applicable only to private concerns, must have an immediate influence on the councils of princes, and guide all their steps, as being the only means of consolidating human institutions, and remedying their imperfections. In consequence, their majesties have agreed on the following articles: —

" Art. 1. Conformably to the words of the Holy Scriptures, which command all men to consider each other as brethren, the three contracting monarchs will remain united by the bonds of a true, and indissoluble fraternity; and, considering each other as fellow-countrymen, they will, on all occasions, and in all places, lend each other aid and assistance; and regarding themselves, towards their subjects and armies, as fathers of families, they will lead them in the same spirit of fraternity with which they are animated to protect religion, peace, and justice.

" 2. In consequence, the sole principle in force, whether between the said government or between their subjects, shall be that of doing each reciprocal

service, and of testifying, by unalterable good-will, the mutual affection with which they ought to be animated to consider themselves as members of one and the same Christian nation, the three allied princes looking on themselves as merely delegated by Providence to govern three branches of one family, namely, Austria, Prussia, and Russia; thus confessing, that the Christian nation, of which they and their people form a part, has in reality no other sovereign than Him to whom alone power really belongs, because in Him alone are found all treasures of love, science, and infinite wisdom; that is to say, God, our Divine Saviour, the word of the Most High, the word of life. Their majesties consequently recommend to their people, with the most tender solicitude, as the sole means of enjoying that peace which arises from a good conscience, and which alone is durable, to strengthen themselves every day more and more in the principles and exercise of the duties which the Divine Saviour has taught mankind.

"3. All the powers who shall choose solemnly to avow the sacred principles which have dictated the present act, and shall acknowledge how important it is for the happiness of nations that those truths should henceforth exercise over the destinies of mankind all the influence which belongs to them, will be received with equal ardour and affection into this holy alliance.

"Done in triplicate, and signed at Paris, the year of grace 1815, Sept. 14. (26.)

"FRANCIS.
"FREDERICK WILLIAM.
"ALEXANDER."

The deep intent of this treaty was seen by many persons of very inferior sagacity to a Brougham and a Voltaire, but escaped the great mass of the people through the most intelligent nations of Europe. Many persons, struck by its singularity, by its evangelical diction, and vague mysticism of tone, thought that it originated in an excess of sincere enthusiasm. The sovereigns, astonished, it was supposed, at their marvellous deliverance, and conscious of their demerit, were impressed with the belief of a miraculous interposition of the Almighty.

A particular train of thought too singly pursued, — association of ideas, — nervous temperament, natural or induced, — are undoubtedly more powerful in some cases than reason and reality, and there are many instances of good sense and the highest order of intellect, blended with the delusions of fanaticism, in the pursuit of great ends. But Alexander of Russia, false, adroit, ambitious, and inordinately vain, — yet without even that genius which is but a strong manifestation of the imagination, or of the passions, — was not a Richelieu, or a Cromwell, to blend the delusions of fanaticism with a remorseless policy like the first, or with an enlightened superior reason like the second. To establish a fraternal league of mutual and benevolent toleration and concord, between the protestant religion of Prussia, the catholic religion of Austria, the Greek religion of Russia, in that beneficent spirit of devout hospitality which prevailed between the local religions and household gods of the various nations of heathen antiquity, was a conception be-

yond the understanding of Alexander, Francis, and Frederick William.

This alliance then may be ascribed to other motives. The popular mind was invited into action by the sovereigns themselves during the last and successful stage of the contest with Napoleon. This new power, diffused and consolidated by secret and even mystic organisation, survived its first object, became more developed and enlightened, and threatened a war of revolutionary innovation against feudal despotism and divine right. The emperor of Russia, encouraged by the success with which he had already imposed upon the easy faith of the world, trumpeted by madame de Stael, and other conceited, selfish, and parasitical traffickers in that great staple of selfishness and charlatanerie — the popular literature of Europe — affecting a sort of tutelage of nations, having every where his literary emissaries and informers — of whom the wretched Kotzebue was one — and adopting a canting mysticism of diction which the most vulgar impostors easily assume*, — the emperor of Russia, with these means and motives, may be reasonably supposed to have contemplated in this league a sort of theocratic despotism to be exercised by a trium-

* Among other influences in the formation of the holy league, has been reckoned that of the German sibyl, madame de Krudener, upon the emperor of Russia. But it was not until the beginning of 1816, that she began her preachings at Bâle, whilst the imperial mystic was at St. Petersburgh. He subsequently took her under his protection, upon her being condemned to silence in Switzerland and Germany; and may possibly have affected prophetic communion with her, as Numa and Sertorius with the nymph and the hind.

virate of tyrants, as an antagonist conservative force to keep down by mutual aid the dangerous and threatening tendencies of the popular mind, and the hostile principle of liberty and reform. The holy alliance, in fine, may be judged by the previous and subsequent acts of the contracting parties; and, viewing it in this light, it may be said of the three sovereigns as of the Roman augurs, that they could hardly have met (for the purpose of signing it) without laughing in each other's faces.

The chancellor of the exchequer, in the course of his financial statement, made on the 12th of February, announced that he should propose an income tax of five per cent. The continuance of this tax, even thus reduced, was strongly deprecated by petitions, especially from the trading cities and towns, and vehemently declaimed against in the house of commons. The minister persisted, and was defeated on a division by a majority of 238 to 201. A loan now became indispensable, and as the greater or lesser amount was, within a certain compass, immaterial, he abandoned, for the relief of the landholders, the war malt tax. He stated the supplies of the year at 39,500,000*l.*; and the ways and means to meet them deficient about 2,500,000*l.* Such were the complication and obscurity in which this great master of arithmetical chiaro-scuro (Nicholas Vansittart,* Lord Bexley) involved his accounts, that Mr. J. P. Grant moved counter-resolutions,—proving upon his view a deficiency of 17,000,000*l.* The majority decided for the minister, but certainly without the remotest understanding of the matters in dispute.

The army estimates, notwithstanding their enormous amount for a time of peace, passed without much difficulty. The proposal of so large a force as 25,000 men for Ireland, — equal to that required for the remainder of the United Kingdom, — excited surprise and animadversion. Mr. Peel, who had just commenced his political life, was at this time secretary for Ireland. His collegiate reputation preceded him in parliament. His superior talents, and highly exercised mind, manifesting themselves through the medium of an eloquence rather subdued and severe than ostentatious or figurative, did not strike the multitude, but made him regarded by the judicious as the leading political aspirant of the time. He on this occasion proved the necessity of the large force proposed in Ireland with convincing energy and mournful truth. But Mr. Peel, unfortunately for Ireland and for himself, instead of looking forward to a political, thought only of a party chieftaincy, and joined under the standard of religious intolerance. His anti-catholic policy neutralised or counteracted the better spirit of his Irish administration, and continues to trammel his ambition even after he has renounced it.

The usual and barren routine of motions for an enquiry into the state of Ireland, and for the repeal of the penal laws, soon followed, with their usual results. A measure of some practical importance — the consolidation of the exchequers of Great Britain and Ireland — took place in the course of the session.

The case of Napoleon was represented as new, and unprovided for by the law of war or of nations.

Lord Castlereagh brought in two bills, authorising and regulating the mode of his detention, with an assurance that every indulgence and enjoyment should be permitted the prisoner, consistently with his safe keeping. Both bills passed without opposition into laws.

Mr. Canning was unconnected with the government since 1809; and for the two last years had not appeared in parliament. A reconciliation, however, had taken place between him and lord Castlereagh. Having to attend an invalid son, who was advised to try the air of Lisbon, Mr. Canning accepted in an evil hour the appointment of ambassador to receive the prince regent of Portugal, who was announced to be preparing for his return from the Brazils. This unfortunate appointment subjected one of the most disinterested and least money-loving of men to popular obloquy, and the humiliation of being put, in the following session, by a motion of Mr. Lambton, upon his defence. Mr. Canning arrived in England early in 1816; and on the 30th of May Mr. Huskisson moved a new writ for Liverpool, upon his appointment to the office of president of the board of controul.

After the house of commons had voted its thanks, to be conveyed by a complimentary deputation to the duke of Wellington, who had just arrived unexpectedly from France, parliament was prorogued by the prince regent in person, on the 2d of July.

The 3d of May in this year was signalised by an event which diffused through the kingdom unqualified joy, — the marriage of the princess Charlotte of Wales. The public felt a lively interest, inspired

by the personal character of the young princess, still more, perhaps, than by her relation to the state. All the circumstances tended to give unalloyed satisfaction. It was a marriage of her own choice, in which political calculations had no share. The chosen husband was third son of a minor German prince; a captain of cavalry in the Austrian service, with hardly any other fortune than his sword. His advantages of person, — the reputation of an amiable character and an accomplished mind, — above all, his being the choice of the princess, — made him for his hour a popular idol. At nine in the evening the marriage was solemnised with extraordinary magnificence, in the apartment called the crimson chamber, at Carlton House. Princes, princesses, lords, ladies, foreign ambassadors, ministers of state, crowded round the altar. The duke of Clarence introduced the bride; the prince regent gave her away; and the event was announced by the Tower guns. The compliance of the regent with the wishes of his daughter diminished, if it did not wholly do away with, his unpopularity as a husband and father. The people, in short, seemed for a moment to forget all — even to the mortality of her who was the object of their affections and hopes.

In the course of the summer, it was remarked that the meetings of the princess Charlotte and her father were infrequent. By some, this was ascribed to her domestic happiness and love of retirement; by others, to her being informed that the regent was actually taking measures to separate himself from her mother by a divorce. The princess of Wales was still on her travels, and disreputable tales

of her conduct and companionships circulated very freely at home and abroad. The rumours of a divorce, however, died away towards the close of the year, either because there was never any foundation for them, or because the prince regent and his ministers found it advisable to give way to public opinion, and to the remonstrances of the princess Charlotte.

In the beginning of September, England had occasion to rejoice once more in the valour of her navy. The enterprise was still more distinguished for the generosity of its motives, than even for its brilliant success. The state of peace made all the nations of Europe more sensible to the outrages of the Barbary corsairs, and allowed the greater powers leisure to attend to the solicitations of the lesser for protection. Admiral lord Exmouth, commanding in the Mediterranean, received orders early in the spring of 1816 to demand from the beys of Tripoli and Tunis, and the dey of Algiers, satisfaction and protection for the flags of the Ionian isles, Naples, and Sardinia, and the total abandonment of Christian slavery. The two former implicitly complied; the last gave partial satisfaction, and rather temporised than refused to treat Christian captives henceforth as prisoners, according to the usages of civilised war. After some weeks had been lost in negotiation, lord Exmouth, with a well equipped British fleet, and the Dutch squadron of admiral Capillen, appeared before Algiers on the 27th of August — opened a tremendous discharge of shot, shells, and rockets upon the city — set it on fire in several parts — destroyed the Algerine

fleet and arsenal — silenced the batteries — killed about 7000 of the Algerines, who, on the whole, fought resolutely — lost on his side, Dutch and British, 883 killed or wounded — and imposed on the dey as chief conditions of peace, the abolition of Christian slavery for ever, and the delivery to the British flag of all slaves within the dominions of the dey, to whatever nation belonging, on the following morning.

It was proclaimed in the speech from the throne at the opening of the session, that "the manufactures, commerce, and revenue of the united kingdom were in a flourishing state." Ministers, in this announcement, proved an equal want of candour and capacity. There was distress at the time to an extent which nothing but presumptuous effrontery would attempt to disguise; and its workings and phenomena were such as would have discovered to persons ordinarily sagacious, that instead of being checked, it must terminate in a severe and perilous crisis. But the government of that period was, with the exception of one man, constituted of persons of a vulgar order of mind, — subaltern politicians, whose chief qualification was routine experience as administrators. They received credit for grand results produced, not by political genius, of which they were destitute, but by extrinsic circumstances and events. Suppose them for a moment judged by the standard of their successes, and this absurdity follows — that the names of Liverpool, Castlereagh, and Vansittart, should descend to posterity as the representative signs of a greater quantity of intellect than those of Pitt, Grenville, and Dundas.

The pressure in the course of the summer was equally grievous upon agriculture and manufactures. The burden of taxes, rent, and tithes continued undiminished; whilst the factitious war prices of land produce fell, and the landholder was ruined. An over-production of manufacturing labour, deprived of the war monopoly of the foreign market, was disposed of at a ruinous sacrifice, or left upon the hands of the producer; and the manufacturing capitalist was reduced to inaction, — the labourer to starvation. The ancient cant of religion and social order had fallen into disrepute; the more recent appeals to military glory and the peace of Europe would not bear repetition in the midst of suffering, complaint, and raging discontent; and the ministers invented a new fallacy, which they expressed by a new phrase — "the transition from war to peace." The simple fact was, that the nation now found itself called upon to pay the price of its glory, and of having restored Louis XVIII.

An inclement season and bad harvest filled up the measure of public calamity. Serious tumults, and nocturnal outrages the most daring and criminal, took place in the agricultural districts of Cambridge, Huntingdon, Norfolk, and Suffolk; and in the manufacturing districts of Warwickshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire, and South Wales. The distressed workmen, banding themselves into disorderly and formidable bodies, violated the public peace by their tumultuous proceedings, or appealed to the public compassion by presenting themselves — a melancholy sight — yoked like brute animals to loaded waggons, which they drew from town to town.

There was a natural and urgent call for retrenchment in the public service, and for the abolition of useless charges. Ministers were obstinately opposed to economical reform. This was ascribed, partly to their individual and family interests, but still more to a placed and pensioned oligarchy, which tyrannised over the ministers as well as the country, through the fallacious and corrupt constitution of the house of commons; and a prayer for parliamentary reform figured in many of the petitions on the state of public distress. The most frank and energetic of these remonstrances, was that of the common hall of London to the prince regent. The citizens in their petition conveyed a severe lesson to the regent, upon "immense subsidies to foreign powers to defend their own territories, or make aggressions on those of others,"—"enormous sums paid for unmerited pensions and sinecures,"—"an unconstitutional and unnecessary military force in time of peace,"—"overwhelming taxation,"—"lavish expenditure,"—"all arising from the inadequate and corrupt state of the representation." This address must have deeply wounded the regent; but the expressions of stern rebuke, and the rude sulkiness of manner with which he replied to it, were ungracious and unwarrantable. In reading the answer, he pointed his resentment by emphasis, pauses, and frowns; and having concluded it, he turned upon his heel, without allowing those whom he addressed the usual and absurd courtesy of kissing his hand. The court of common council retaliated, by recording

the answer in their proceedings, with a censure upon the ministers who advised it.

In London, the general distress of the time was chiefly felt by the Spitalfields weavers; who, of the manufacturing population of the metropolis, are the most formidable for their spirit, density, and organisation. A petition, professing to be from a meeting of the workmen of this quarter, to the regent, was forwarded through lord Sidmouth, the home secretary, about the middle of November; and an adjourned meeting to hear the result, was fixed for the following 2d of December, to be held in an open space called Spafields, on the north-eastern outskirts of the metropolis. Whilst at this adjourned meeting a person of some notoriety, named Hunt, was haranguing the meeting from a waggon at one point, another orator from his waggon at another addressed his section of the multitude — declaimed on the insensibility of the regent to their sufferings — jumped down from his rostrum — called upon his hearers to follow him — was followed by a disorderly rabble, bearing inscribed banners and tri-coloured cockades — rushed through several leading streets of the city — plundered a few gunsmiths' shops of fire-arms — passed in at one and out at another gate of the royal exchange, leaving three prisoners behind them, locked in — made what may be called mock demonstrations of an attack upon the bank and tower — excited for a time the terrors of an insurrection — and, after being foiled by the defensive police of the city, separated and dissolved in their own weakness. The lord mayor (Wood) and a few other magistrates performed their duty with great

promptitude and effect. About half a dozen of the rioters were arrested in the course of the day. Two persons only, named Watson, father and son, apothecaries, as it proved, in very reduced circumstances, had any pretensions to respectability or intelligence. The father was apprehended; but the son, described as the person who called upon the rabble to follow him, and who grievously wounded an individual during the plunder of a gunsmith's shop, effected his escape to America. Never was attempt at political insurrection, whether premeditated or improvised, more crazy and contemptible.

The opening of the year 1817 was truly dismal. A rise in the price of corn, produced by a bad harvest, gave the landholders a faint, melancholy, and even doubtful advantage; whilst it aggravated starvation into famine in the manufacturing districts. Voluntary benevolence did all that could be expected of the most humane and generous people, by public subscription and private relief; but the evil far exceeded its utmost limits. Acts of lawless violence and tumultuary desperation continued unabated, and, it may be said, unchecked. The ministers appeared rather to observe the popular movements, than employ the force placed at their disposal by the law of the land. The chief, if not the only exception, was the trial at the Old Bailey of Watson the elder, and three persons named Preston, Cashman, and Hooper, on a capital charge as Spafields insurgents. Cashman only was convicted. He was a reckless, desolate, Irish sailor, scarcely conscious of the crime into which he had been drawn by distress and the braggart declamations of vulgar sedi-

tionists, who were too dastardly and expert to commit themselves.

The meeting of parliament was fixed for the 28th of January. Preparations were made for the opening of the session by the regent in person. There was a prevalent impression, perhaps maliciously encouraged, among the more distressed and discontented of the common people, that the regent was insensible to their sufferings. His notorious taste for gorgeous pomp and oriental seclusion, favoured the supposition that he looked upon his subjects as born for his use. A numerous mob crowded his passage to the house of lords; but no expressions of insult or disapprobation were indulged. The regent, however, marked something sinister in the looks and silence of the crowd. This so affected him, that he read the speech with a weak and faltering voice.

The royal speech was looked for with more than usual interest. After the routine topics of the king's continued illness, — the friendly assurances of foreign powers, — the brilliant achievement of lord Exmouth — the renewal and conclusion of an Indian war in the Nepaul territory; it admitted a deficiency in the revenue — recommended a financial enquiry — anticipated benefit from the approaching issue of a new coinage; and concluded with the following reference to the state of public distress: — "Deeply as I lament the pressure of these evils upon the country, I am sensible that they are of a nature not to admit of an immediate remedy; but whilst I observe with peculiar satisfaction the fortitude with which so many privations have been borne, and the

active benevolence which has been employed to mitigate them, I am persuaded that the great sources of our national prosperity are essentially unimpaired; and I entertain a confident expectation that the native energy of the country will at no distant period surmount all the difficulties in which we are involved. In considering our internal situation, you will, I doubt not, feel a just indignation at the attempts which have been made to take advantage of the distresses of the country, for the purpose of exciting a spirit of sedition and violence. I am too well convinced of the loyalty and good sense of the great body of his majesty's subjects, to believe them capable of being perverted by the arts which are employed to seduce them; but I am determined to omit no precautions for preserving the public peace, and for counteracting the designs of the disaffected: and I rely with the utmost confidence on your cordial support and co-operation, in upholding a system of law and government, from which we have derived inestimable advantages, which has enabled us to conclude, with unexampled glory, a contest whereon depended the best interests of mankind, and which has been hitherto felt by ourselves, as it is acknowleged by other nations, to be the most perfect that has ever fallen to the lot of any people."

These observations were slovenly and ill-judged. It was little short of mockery to talk of "unexampled glory" to a famishing population. But the ministers were resolved upon what they called vigorous measures, and the speech was a declaration of war against sedition and reform.

An amendment to the address was moved by

Mr. Ponsonby, in the house of commons. The debate was suddenly interrupted by a message from the lords, desiring a conference in the painted chamber. It proved that lord Sidmouth, the home secretary, had made a communication to the house of lords, of an attempt upon the life of the prince regent, on his return from the house. Lord James Murray, a lord of the bed-chamber, who, with the duke of Montrose, sat in the carriage with the regent, stated that the window was perforated by two bullets, discharged, he supposed, from an air-gun; and that in a few seconds more, the glass was broken by a stone. Notwithstanding the confidence of lord James Murray as to bullets, none were found in the carriage; there was no sign of its being perforated within; no one was wounded; and the opposite window, which was raised at the time, remained untouched. It was, however, in any case, a gross and criminal outrage; and both houses, having sent a joint address of congratulation to the regent on his escape, adjourned to the next day.

They re-assembled accordingly: lord Grey moved an amendment, in which, as well as in his speech, he urged rigid economy; efficient, not nominal, retrenchment; and enquiry into the state of the nation. It was negatived without a division. Mr. Ponsonby in the house of commons renewed his amendment, which was rejected by a majority of 264 to 112.

On the 3d of February, the following message from the regent was presented to both houses: — "His royal highness the prince regent, acting in the name and on behalf of his majesty, has given

orders that there be laid before the house, papers, containing information respecting certain practices, meetings, and combinations in the metropolis, and in different parts of the kingdom, evidently calculated to endanger the public tranquillity, to alienate the affections of his majesty's subjects from his majesty's person and government, and to bring into hatred and contempt the whole system of our laws and constitution. His royal highness recommends to the house to take these papers into their immediate and serious consideration." Lord Sidmouth in the house of lords, and lord Castlereagh in the house of commons, presented a sealed *green bag* containing the ominous papers. The thanks of both houses were unanimously voted to the regent, and the two green bags respectively submitted to secret committees — the one of eleven lords, the other of twenty-one commoners.

The ministers gave no intimation of their designs, beyond the disclaimer of lord Sidmouth that the message originated in the guilty attack upon the regent. It was, however, well understood, and openly charged upon them, that they contemplated inroads upon the public liberty.

On the 18th and 19th of February the two committees made their respective reports, and concurrently proclaimed the existence of a desperate and widely spread treasonable conspiracy. The vagueness of statement, the artifices of expression, the palpable exaggerations in the reports, combined with the opinion and knowledge which a free and intelligent nation must always have of what is passing within its own bosom, stripped these

oracles of all terror, and even of public respect. The authority was suspected and derided, rather than the threatened danger feared or credited, and the green bags soon became a by-word of popular odium and ridicule. In truth, the reports of the lords and commons bore a close resemblance to those concocted in the inquisition, during the existence of that redoubted institution in its "palmy state." The same practical sophism — the same sort of vicious circle — may be observed in the procedures of both. Here ministers supply, under seal, their materials of accusation, which, after passing through the alembic of two committees, are returned to them in the form of reports; — and upon these abtracts of their own case, supplied secretly and *ex parte* by themselves, they proceed, as upon extrinsic independent evidence, to suspend the constitution.

On the 24th of February, the grand secret of ministers exploded in both houses. Lord Sidmouth in the one, and lord Castlereagh in the other, announced their intention to submit the five following bills; viz.:— 1. A bill to extend to the person of the regent, the act for the better protection of his majesty's person. 2. A bill to revive the act of 1795, against seditious meetings. 3. A bill to revive the act of the 39th George III., against corresponding societies. 4. A bill to revive the act against the seducing soldiers and sailors. 5. A bill to suspend the habeas corpus act. The second and fifth bills were strenuously resisted: lord Wellesley opposed the suspension of the constitution, in a speech of rare, varied, and most accomplished eloquence. Every mitigation even attempted in committee

failed; ministers seemed to impart the contagion of their fears to a majority of the lords and commons. At the close of February, the constitution was suspended, and lords Liverpool, Sidmouth, and Castlereagh, assumed over Englishmen, the same power which they had so often denounced as odious, intolerable, and tyrannical, when exercised by the French jacobins, under the name of *Loi des suspects*.

London was represented as the great focus of conspiracy; and yet no new culprit was discovered. The Spafields rioters—Watson (the elder), Preston, and Hooper—were raised from imprisonment as misdemeanants, to the dignity of traitors committed to the Tower. Thistlewood, who, like young Watson, fled from the capital charge, was apprehended, and also committed to the Tower, under a charge of treason. Lord Castlereagh lent his Irish experience to the passive mediocrity of lord Liverpool, and to the inhumanising terrors which beset the heart or overwhelmed the understanding of lord Sidmouth. It was chiefly in the manufacturing districts that the ministry executed the conservative vigour of its suspicions and incarcerations. Government emissaries, and spies, sent down from London in the guise of delegates, prowled among the starving people. Such miscreants will make conspiracy where they do not find it. An atrocious system of stimulating and suborning crime, for the purpose of denouncing it, and, where this failed, supplying its place by perjury, soon prevailed. It is true that the assemblages and proceedings of the starving populations in the great manufacturing towns demanded the utmost vigilance

of government, and the strong arm of the law. A large body of the people of Manchester formed the despairing, rather than the traitorous or seditious resolution of supplying themselves with each a blanket, and a few days' provision, for the purpose of proceeding unarmed to London, with a petition to the regent, setting forth their distress. They were to be joined by others from Stockport, Macclesfield, and Knutsford. This melancholy rather than formidable march * had hardly commenced, when the blanketeers, as they were called, encountered the yeomanry and regular troops, and were either taken and imprisoned, or dispersed. But a government of ordinary firmness and capacity would have met this danger, and much more, with the powers confided to the administration by the established law of the land. The fears and weakness of the ministry, the disposition to abuse extraordinary powers inherent in local magistrates and the subalterns of party, and the profligate arts of spies and informers, filled the jails with objects of suspicion or alleged crime. Many were soon released as arbitrarily as they were imprisoned. Those who were prominent as leaders or declaimers at the meetings of the populace were detained, and in many instances removed for custody to the prisons of London.

It is a relief to draw the curtain upon these de-

* "Nothing," says a Macclesfield newspaper of the day, "could be more wretched and pitiable than the condition of the few who reached this town; some actually fainting from weariness; and all of them without baggage, or any apparent resource with which to proceed 20 miles farther towards London."

plorable remembrances, and pause for a moment upon a motion, but above all upon a speech, made at this period, in the house of commons, by Mr. Brougham. On the 15th of March he submitted to that house four resolutions on the state of the nation. The speech with which he introduced them is invaluable, perhaps unrivalled, as a historic record of facts, combined with meditative sagacity and vast acquirement. After sketching the state of the country by broad and prominent traits of the decline of trade, and the privations and endurances of the people, he exposed the false system of commercial economy upon which parliament had long legislated, and taught those principles of commercial science which, adopted afterwards by the more enlightened of the ministry, repealed the navigation law, and liberated trade. "The period," says the speaker, "is now arrived, when, the war being closed, and prodigious changes having taken place almost all over the world, it becomes absolutely necessary to enter upon a careful but fearless revision of our whole commercial system, that we may be enabled safely, yet promptly, to eradicate those vices which the lapse of time has occasioned or displayed; to retrace our steps, where we shall find that they have deviated from the line of true policy; to adjust and accommodate our laws to the alteration of circumstances; to abandon many prejudices, alike antiquated and senseless, unsuited to the advanced age in which we live, and unworthy of the sound judgment of the nation." Adverting to the navigation law, he says — "But, whatever may have been the good policy of the navigation

law, I am quite clear that we have adhered to its strict enactments a century after the circumstances which alone justified its adoption had ceased to exist."

The eloquence of this speech, not in the characteristic manner of the speaker, is another signal proof of the versatility of his powers. It is the eloquence of history, or of deliberative counsel, rather than that of dialectics and debate. The writer of these pages cannot resist the temptation to enrich them with the following passage, referring to the infant republics of South America: —

"Surveying, then, the derangement which pervades every branch of the public economy; seeing how our trade is cramped by the short-sighted operations of an unenlightened and senseless policy; finding what trifling relief, and that little accompanied with serious obstructions, it has derived from the prosperous condition of our foreign affairs; we may assuredly affirm, that there never was a period in the vicissitudes of our fortunes, when British commerce might, with so much truth, be said to labour for its existence. Casting our eye over every point of the compass, and scarce able to descry any from which a solitary ray of comfort or of hope breaks in, it is natural for this house, to whose hands the sum of affairs is committed — for our unfortunate brethren, suffering under distresses that baffle description, after bearing us, by their industry and their patience, through the late eventful struggle — for the whole population of the empire, exhausted by the drains of a protracted warfare, weighed down by the pressure of intolerable

public burdens which it has accumulated, and now cut off from the temporary relief which the unnatural monopoly of that war afforded; it is, I will say, but natural and reasonable for us all to direct our expectations towards any untried resources, any new opening that may present itself to the industry of the community. There can be no field of enterprise so magnificent in promise, so well calculated to raise sanguine hopes, so congenial to the most generous sympathies, so consistent with the best and the highest interests of England, as the vast continent of South America. He must, indeed, be more than temperate, he must be a cold reasoner, who can glance at those regions, and not grow warm. The illustrious historian*, who has described the course of their rude invaders, relates, if I mistake not, that when, after unparalleled dangers, amid privations almost insupportable, through a struggle with sufferings beyond endurance — weary, hungry, exhausted with the toil, scared at the perils of their march — they reached at length the lofty summits, so long the object of their anxious enterprise, they stood at once motionless, in gratitude for their success, in silent amazement at the boundless ocean stretched out before them, and the immeasurable dominion spread beneath their feet, the scene of all their fond expectations. And now the people of this country, after their long and dreary pilgrimage, after all the dangers they have braved, the difficulties they have overcome, the hardships they have survived, in something

like the same state of suffering and exhaustion, have that very prospect opened to their view! If any sense of justice towards them, any regard for the dictates of sound policy, any reverence for the real wisdom of past ages, has influence over our councils, they must be enabled and invited to approach that hemisphere, and partake in the numberless benefits which flow from such an intercourse. Upon our good pleasure it depends to command the virgin resources of that mighty expanse of territory, variegated with every species of soil, exposed to all the gradations of climate, rich from the fallow of centuries, sufficiently peopled to raise every variety of the produce we want, yet too thinly inhabited to threaten our own industry with any rivalry, watered in all directions by seas rather than rivers, studded with harbours through which to distribute its wealth over the Old World."

Lord Castlereagh, in pursuance of a recommendation from the throne, at the opening of the session, made an exposition of the state of the finances; and moved a committee of finance, which was appointed accordingly. He proposed to make reductions of expenditure to the amount, on his showing, of two millions and a half, but the revenue fell short between nine and ten millions of that of the preceding year. The sum of 500,000*l.*, in exchequer bills, for public works and fisheries in Great Britain, 250,000*l.* out of the consolidated fund for the same purposes in Ireland, were voted in April, as means of alleviating the public distress.

The speaker of the house of commons, Mr. Abbot, resigned, from ill health, on the 30th of May; re-

ceived, as usual, a peerage, by the title of baron Colchester; and was succeeded in the chair of the commons by Mr. Manners Sutton.

Lord Sidmouth had subjected popular meetings to such shackles as nearly took away the right, and substituted arbitrary imprisonment for the British liberty of the subject. Not content with this stretch of authority beyond the constitution, he issued a circular to the lieutenants of counties, calling their attention to what he called blasphemous and seditious publications, and announcing to them, on the authority of the attorney and solicitor general, that a justice of peace might apprehend and hold to bail any person charged on oath with the publication of "such libels." The liberty of the press, and the question of libel, thus became dependent on the simple conjunction of a justice and an informer. He had, it is true, the authority of the law officers,—placemen during pleasure, political nonentities, and of no repute as constitutional lawyers. This remarkable circular was brought under the notice of the house of lords by lord Grey. It is a singular fact, that lord Grey, on this occasion, made an able and erudite law argument; which all the law lords, including lord Ellenborough, made vain efforts to refute; and which lord Ellenborough had the manliness to eulogise. A large majority, nevertheless, did not scruple to negative lord Grey's motion for a copy of the opinion of the law officers of the crown. The subject was brought before the house of commons by sir S. Romilly, whose argument was equally triumphant, and as unscrupulously disposed of.

The country became somewhat more tranquil as the summer approached. It was not that there was less of distress, or even that the power of imprisonment at discretion vested in ministers had this tranquillising effect; but rather that the spies were now suspected or detected by the people, and that the harvest of sedition in consequence fell off. Lord Sidmouth, however, still pursuing his career of timid violence and arbitrary imbecility, and haunted, it may be supposed, by phantoms of danger, which he took for realities, said the prevailing tranquillity was but a treacherous calm; produced two supplementary green bags, the contents of which were examined and reported on as before by the same secret committees; and the suspension of the habeas corpus act was continued beyond the sitting of parliament.

The ministers had an easy game whilst their measures underwent no other criterion than that of majorities in the two houses; but they had yet to encounter that touchstone of truth, and palladium of liberty,—a British jury. They had obtained one verdict; but the sacrifice of a solitary victim, whilst it vindicated public justice and the peace of society, proved nothing for lord Sidmouth. The sailor Cashman may have justly suffered as a capital felon, but most assuredly was not a treasonable conspirator. Whilst the supplementary green bags were revealing to the committees the further progress of treason, and the reports upon them were yet pending, the ministers brought to trial, in the King's Bench, the four culprits confined under a charge of high treason in the Tower. This was a momentous crisis. If

the accused were to be tried for their lives, the ministers were, at the same time, on trial for their measures and reputations.

On the 9th of June, the four prisoners — Watson (the elder), Thistlewood, Preston, and Hooper — were conveyed from the Tower, and placed, with all "the pomp and circumstance" of prisoners of state, at the bar of the king's bench. They asserted their right of challenge, and were put singly upon their trials. Watson, the only one of them who had any appearance of education or intelligence, was taken first. He was defended by Messrs. Copley (lord Lyndhurst) and Wetherell.* The trial lasted several days, and was attended by the leading opposition members of both houses. The principal witness for the crown was an accomplice or spy named Castles. He underwent direct and cross examinations at great length, and deposed to acts of unequivocal conspiracy and treason without number; but the infamy of his character, and the monstrous improbabilities of his narrative, stripped him of all credit in the eyes of the jury. The prisoner, after a short deliberation, was pronounced "not guilty;" and Westminster Hall rang with the tremendous cheering of a great concourse of people which awaited the event. The case having thus failed, the prosecution of the remaining prisoners was abandoned, and they were all instantly discharged. This result covered the ministers with

* The able defence made by Mr. Copley led to his promotion, and Mr. Wetherell left his practice in chancery to defend prisoners in the king's bench, by way of wreaking his vengeance upon the government for a recent neglect.

derision and hatred. It was observed, that even supposing the prisoners guilty, yet their designs were so utterly senseless and contemptible, so indicative of raving imbecility, that an able minister, far from suspending the constitution, would not put off on their account his morning gown and slippers.

In the course of the summer, disturbances were revived, but easily suppressed, in some of the midland and northern districts. At the York assizes several persons were taken up on charges of treason. The informations against some were dismissed by the grand jury; and the rest, on their being brought to trial, were acquitted, with the exception of two persons who were detained in prison under the suspension of the habeas corpus act. The result of a special commission sent down to Derby in October was different. Three men were capitally convicted, and executed. Several others were permitted to plead guilty, and had their lives spared. But supposing even here that the prisoners were guilty of a capital crime, and had even brought themselves within the legal construction of the crime of treason, the evidence for the crown fell far short of proving the case put forward by ministers in their secret papers, as set forth in the reports of the secret committees.

The last exploit, and one of the most unlucky, was the prosecution of some parodies, in a political sense, of the Litany, and other parts of the church service, as blasphemous libels. The real crime of these parodies was not that they were blasphemous, but that they personally galled lord Castlereagh upon a point which was never touched, however

lightly, in his presence, without calling forth the natural, perhaps generous, energy and better eloquence of the man, in place of the wretched oratory of the politician, and making the blood mantle in his usually pale cheek. Mr. Hone, the publisher, since distinguished more reputably by his curious researches as a literary antiquarian, defended himself chiefly on the ground that such parodies had the negative sanction of uniform toleration; cited several which had appeared at various periods, from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries; and was acquitted. The trial took place before Mr. Justice Abbot, who had just been raised to the bench. There were still two more indictments remaining against Mr. Hone. Lord Ellenborough took the place of Mr. Justice Abbot on the second day; and upon the opening of the trial, interdicted Mr. Hone from pursuing the same line of defence. Blasphemy, he said, like other offences, derived no sanction or protection from previous impunity. It was expected that the greater experience, firmness, and authority of the chief justice, would impose silence upon the accused, and obtain a conviction from the jury. In the course of an unceasing worrying struggle of several hours between the accused and the judge, the former succeeded in throwing out fragments of his obnoxious defence, sometimes by artifice, sometimes by clamour, and a second verdict of "Not guilty" was returned. The chief justice next day appeared exhausted and depressed; the contest between him and the accused was on his part more languid, and there was a third verdict of acquittal. Lord Ellenborough never re-

covered the shock given to his health, and mortification to his spirit, in these remarkable trials; and the ministry was exposed to fresh odium and contempt.

This disastrous year would have been marked as unhallowed, with solemn acts of expiation, in the annals of pagan Rome. It closed with an event which struck the nation to the heart. On the 6th of November, the princess Charlotte of Wales died in a few hours after having given birth to a still-born child. It would have been impossible for this princess, had she lived, to realise the hopes which she inspired. Men naturally seek refuge from the disgusts of the present, in their visions of the future. Never was sorrow more universal and sincere. Her death was felt at every fireside as a domestic calamity. On the 18th of November, her remains were conveyed from Claremont to Windsor, there to repose within the dismal magnificence of the royal vault in St. George's Chapel.

CHAP. XXVI.

1818—1819.

THE sixth and last session of the existing parliament was opened by commission, on the 27th of January, 1818. Whether parental grief or conventional decorum had the greater share in the regent's abstinence from appearing as the first figure in a ceremonial which had such charms for him, that, rather than renounce it, he exposed himself to the licentious humour of the populace, was made a question at the time. The loss of an only child in the bloom of youth and hope is among the most afflicting incidents of mortality; and it so affected the regent, that copious bleeding was judged necessary, to prevent the shock which he had received from endangering his life. The desolation of his domestic hearth,—the sense of holding a "barren sceptre in his hand,"—might be expected to strip royalty of its pomp, and society of its enjoyments, in his eyes, for a long time to come. But the princess was scarcely three months consigned to the tomb, when the public was scandalised by learning that the regent, giving way to exulting spirits, or a vanity out of season, exhibited his accomplishments in music at the Prussian ambassador's table by singing a song.

The death of the princess was referred to in the

speech of the commissioners with little grace of expression or feeling. This document was chiefly remarkable for the sanguine tone in which the ministers congratulated the nation and themselves, on the return of public prosperity and quiet. It concluded with a recommendation that additional churches should be built, "to meet the increased and increasing population of the country," and promote "the religious and moral habits of the people." The address in the house of lords was unanimously agreed to. In the house of commons it was agreed to without a division, but not without animadversion. The system of demoralising *espionnage*, arbitrary imprisonment, and unwarrantable state prosecutions for treason, pursued by ministers in the north of England, and in Scotland, was exposed with great force by lord Althorp and sir Samuel Romilly, and vindicated by the attorney-general (Shepherd), in what was regarded an unfortunate defence.

On the following day, lord Sidmouth brought in a bill to repeal the habeas corpus suspension act; and, in order to expedite its progress, the standing orders of the house of lords were suspended. Lord Holland said he considered the act about to be repealed a great public calamity. "Believing," said he, "as I most firmly do, that the habeas corpus,—a right of the people, equal to that of your lordships to sit and vote in this house, and of the king to the exercise of his sovereign prerogatives,— has been suspended upon garbled, tainted, and *ex parte* evidence, I am not satisfied with the simple repeal of that act, without a previous and solemn enquiry into the circumstances under which it was passed." Lord Sidmouth,

in reply, reasserted the existence of a treasonable conspiracy, the necessity and benefits of the suspension, the wisdom and vigour of his own conduct; and the repeal bill, carried through its several stages the same evening, was sent to the commons. It was received, and carried through all its stages by the house of commons, with equal rapidity, in the course of the night.

Secret papers under seal in green bags were once more presented by viscounts Sidmouth and Castlereagh to the lords and commons, on the 2d and 5th of February, and, after some conversation rather than debate, referred as before to secret committees. The object of these papers was well known before it was avowed. "I must," said lord Castlereagh, "*frankly* state, that I think a bill of indemnity necessary." Mr. Tierney treated this clumsy proceeding with great point and humour. "The ministers," said he, "know that, by their procedings in the last year, they have during the last months, been making out a *primâ facie* case against themselves, in the mind of every man in the country; and now they want a case made out for them, and that under the sanction of a committee of secrecy. The noble lord, with the candour of which he gives such frequent examples, says, he should have no objection to a bill of indemnity. No one will doubt, without this candour, that he wishes for a bill of indemnity if he can get it; and to this end he proposes a committee, chosen by ballot, to sit on the papers in this bag. Why, this was one of the coarsest juggles which had ever been played off upon mankind. How had the secretary of state acted? He

had not taken up a few persons, who, by their influence, or by the ramifications of extensive connections, might be dangerous; but he had gone, as it were, with a drag-net through particular counties, taking up whole classes of men. He believed the secretary had acted hastily, and in a manner which he would not have done, if it had not been a cabinet system to take measures of vigour. Alarm had been the daily bread of the administration; and nothing was to be done but to keep alive the idea that danger was imminent, and that insurrections hung over our heads. They had now better information than they had last session. They had not to proceed upon hints in the dark, or on the impression which might be produced on any respectable gentleman in the committee, but on the result of long judicial proceedings." He next adverted to the spy system in the manufacturing districts, and more especially to the infamous artifices of a miscreant named Oliver, a government spy, who had been sent down in the character of delegate from a club of London conspirators, which never was in being. Mr. Bragge Bathurst, one of the Sidmouth party, who has quartered himself upon the public as a placeman, or a pensioner, for near half a century, and was chiefly remarkable for the whimsical licence with which he used the word "therefore" as a mere expletive in speech, said in reply, that as to Oliver, he had been only "accidentally," or "incidentally," present at the treasonable meeting of which the proceedings were disclosed by him.

The report of the secret committee of the house

of lords was presented, on the 23d of February, by the duke of Montrose. After a review in detail of the matters to which the secret papers referred, it concluded as follows: — "On the whole, therefore, it has appeared to the committee that the government, in the execution of the powers vested in it by the two acts before mentioned, has acted with due discretion and moderation; and, as far as appears to the committee, the magistrates in the several disturbed districts have, by their activity and vigilance, contributed materially to the preservation of the public peace." The duke of Montrose, on the 25th, brought in a bill of indemnity, which, after a fruitless and fatiguing series of debates and divisions, was passed on the 5th of March by a majority of 93 to 27. Ten peers recorded their dissent in a protest, which remains a valuable and ably written historical record.

The secret committee of the commons, having made their report in the same spirit as the lords, the attorney-general introduced a bill of indemnity on the 10th of March. Mr. Lambton, after some observations of great force and severity, moved an amendment, consigning it to that day six months. The amendment was negatived by a majority of 190 to 64, and the bill read a first time. It was read a second time on the following day, by a majority of 89 to 24. The chief discussion took place upon the order of the day for committing it on the 11th of March. Several petitions, complaining of grievous oppression during the suspension of the habeas corpus, were presented to the

house. The allegations of the petitioners were in some instances grossly exaggerated, distorted, or false. A person named Ogden neutralised the justice and compassion really due to any oppressions which he endured, by a scandalous and disgusting falsification of his case. He complained of an afflicting infirmity brought on by his "ponderous irons," his "excruciating tortures" during sixteen hours of neglect and solitude in gaol, and "an hour and forty minutes" under a surgical operation, described by him with disgusting minuteness; when, in point of fact, and upon his own confession, it turned out that he was cured in prison at the public expense, and with the utmost humanity, of an infirmity under which he had been suffering for twenty years. Mr. Canning, in discussing the allegations and veracity of these petitions, exposed the case of Ogden to the derision of the house, and was loudly cheered. In the newspapers next day no two versions of what he said precisely coincided One version, from its alliterative point, was seized upon out of parliament, and made the ground of fixing upon him the charge of ridiculing the sufferings of a fellow-creature. The turn given to what fell from him wounded Mr. Canning, a man of humanity and spirit, most deeply. An anonymous pamphlet, in the form of a letter to him, contained the following words:—

"The power, almost absolute, which has been, and may again be, placed, in your hands, may make you *a respectable victim*; and be assured, sir, that if ever I should be a prisoner of state, and, after being maimed by your gaolers, should be assaulted by

your jokes, I WILL PUT YOU TO DEATH with the same deliberation as I now give you this timely warning. This is no idle, although it is a defensive, menace; nor is the resolution confined to one individual; — IDEM TRECENTI JURAVIMUS."

Mr. Canning addressed to the care of the publisher, for the anonymous author, a short and very explicit private note. It would be unjust to the taste and temper of Mr. Canning to give the solitary words of challenge in this note, without the introduction: —

"I received, early in the last week, the copy of your pamphlet, which you (I take for granted) had the attention to send to me. Soon after, I was informed, on the authority of your publisher, that you had withdrawn the whole impression from him, with the view (as was supposed) of suppressing the publication. I since learn, however, that the pamphlet, though not sold, is circulated under blank covers. I learn this from (among others) the gentleman to whom the pamphlet has been industriously attributed, but who has voluntarily and absolutely denied to me that he has any knowledge of it or its author.

"To you, sir, whoever you may be, I address myself thus directly, for the purpose of expressing to you my opinion, that *you are a liar and a slanderer, and want courage only to be an assassin.* I have only to add, that no man knows of my writing to you, and that I shall maintain the same reserve so long as I have an expectation of hearing from you in your own name."

The pamphlet was a puerile imitation of Junius;

and, on that account, ascribed to sir Philip Francis, the person to whom Mr. Canning alludes as having disavowed it. The author, still burlesquing Junius, refused to unmask. "Whilst," said he, in an anonymous reply, "Mr. Lambton is a 'dolt and an idiot;' I am content to be a slanderer, liar, and assassin." This was an adverse, not a parallel, case; Mr. Lambton was *not* "content." The circumstance alluded to was this:—Mr. Canning had used the words "dolt and idiot" in the course of replying to a speech of Mr. Lambton. The latter instantly rose in his place, but was anticipated by the former, who as instantly gave such an explanation of what he said, as no gentleman could refuse to give or to accept.

The author of the pamphlet has done better things, and, if not redeemed his error, at least laid claims to a mitigation of reproach. Many persons were of opinion, that Mr. Canning transgressed the bounds of dignity and moderation in his extreme resentment; but an impatient sensibility of honour under obloquy and injustice is one of those weaknesses — if weakness it be — of well constituted minds, which divide opinion only upon the question whether it should be excused or applauded.

The susceptible temperament of Mr. Canning was also acted upon, at this period, by the false position in which he had most unfortunately placed himself. It was an error to continue, after the death of Pitt, embarked with his surviving crew. Pitt, had he lived, would accord to Canning's unpatronised ambition and genius the due share in the public

counsels, which was denied them by the jealous inferiority of the partisans who have since discredited Pitt's memory by misusing his name. A second and more serious error of Mr. Canning was, his recent entrance into office with the Castlereaghs and Sidmouths, from whom he had withdrawn himself in disgust, and his contempt for whose incapacity he had put upon record. But a leading part in the government of a powerful kingdom and a free people, is the great purpose of existence to every mind of historic tone and stature, conscious of its powers; and if Canning, to reach the sphere of his ambition, was obliged to capitulate with an oligarchy, it was the fault of a vicious system, rather than of the statesman. To return to the indemnity bill: it was read a third time and passed, on the 13th of May, by a majority of 82 to 23.

In pursuance of recommendations in the commissioners' speech at the opening of the session, the finance committee of the preceding year was revived, and an act passed for building additional churches in populous parishes. Since the termination of the war, the repeal of the bank restriction act, or resumption of cash payments, was periodically talked over, rather than earnestly discussed. Nothing could be more shallow than the pretences, or more transparent than the unavowed reasons, for which cash payments were put off. The speakers distinguished as most conversant with the subject in the present and other sessions, were Messrs. Tierney, Grenfell, Frankland Lewis, and J. P. Grant.

Three royal marriages, upon the failure of a royal progeny, which resulted from the death of

the princess Charlotte, took place during the session of parliament. The duke of Clarence married the princess of Saxe-Meiningen; the duke of Kent, the princess of Leiningen, sister of prince Leopold; and the duke of Cambridge, the princess of Hesse. Suitable provisions for the several dukes on their marriages were voted, on the recommendation of the regent. Lord Castlereagh made a conciliatory or deprecatory appeal in favour of the duke of Cumberland, and that personage came in for an additional 6000*l.* a-year, in company with his brothers.*

Immediately before the close of the session, Mr. Brougham succeeded in carrying the appointment of a commission to enquire into the abuses of public charities for the education of the poor. This was the first great practical step towards that system of public or popular instruction, in which so much has since been achieved by this eminent man, who has already stamped the impress of his remarkable genius so widely and deeply upon the generation in which he lives. The ministers, having failed to throw out his bill, so altered it as to cripple its operations. Lord Eldon used all his authority, moral and legal, against it in the upper house, and, with the simplicity peculiar to him, recommended the poor to seek redress against the rich in the court of chancery! The measure, however, even mutilated, effected a breach hardly contemplated at the moment, by either its enemies or friends.

* Mr. Holme Sumner said, that lord Castlereagh "hooked in" the duke of Cumberland.

The prince regent, in person, closed the session with a speech; immediately after which the chancellor declared the parliament dissolved.

Distress and discontent, though mitigated, still prevailed through the country. A sort of diversion was created by the general election. Sir Samuel Romilly, without personal solicitation, patronage, or promises, — with only the ascendant of his talents and virtues, — was returned for Westminster. But, to adopt the philosophic and affecting apostrophe of Burke, on a somewhat similar occasion, "What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!" His election had not long taken place when, overcome by a domestic grief, he died, like Whitbread, by his own hand, in a moment of nervous despondency or disgust with life. Sir Samuel Romilly united an intellect of the first order with the purest character. He was one of the very few English lawyers who ascended from puny detail to general principles *, combined a humane and eloquent philosophy with the practice of the bar, and attained an European

* He introduced in this session a bill to take away the capital part of the act respecting privately stealing in shops, &c., and set forth in the preamble the maxim, that extreme severity of punishment tends to procure impunity for crime. The attorney-general, a mere lawyer, was horror struck at a general principle, and besought the house, in its "practical wisdom," to expunge it. "I cannot," said sir Samuel Romilly, "accede. In modern legislation, acts are founded upon no principles at all: I wish, on the contrary, to pursue the reasonable course of setting forth in the preamble that upon which my bill is founded." The authority of sir S. Romilly carried it through the commons, but it was thrown out, through the influence of lord Eldon, in the house of lords.

reputation. In every generous cause, — civil and religious liberty, the abolition of African slavery, the diffusion of education, and the redress of private wrong, — he was ever found among the foremost. It was sir Samuel Romilly who gave the first signal of that reform in the absurd and revolting barbarisms of British jurisprudence, both civil and criminal, which has been advanced a step farther by sir James Mackintosh, in a spirit worthy of his predecessor, and by sir Robert Peel, with a surprising intrepidity of reason for a tory and a minister.

Another prominent figure in the judiciary and political transactions of the kingdom, lord Ellenborough, chief justice of England, disappeared from the scene of life at the same period. The following sketch of his character, which has the recommendation — very infrequent with respect to him — of being dispassionate, appeared in print at the time: — "Lord Ellenborough filled, for sixteen years, that judicial station which, in this country, is the second in rank, but the first in difficulty, and, incomparably, the most calculated to attract the popular eye, and excite the popular passions. He was at once the object of admiration and animosity: the latter slandered his character; the former exaggerated his merits. He was rightly judged by those who respected, and by some who feared him. ..... From Cambridge he brought with him a vast stock of classical learning; he had read the poets, historians, and orators of Greece and Rome. He loved and studied them; but still his mind, though richly endowed, was by no means ornamented. He was eloquent; for eloquence is the gift of nature. But with oratory he seemed never to have cultivated

an acquaintance; perhaps, because he disdained its discipline. His delivery was ungraceful; he moved his arms with uncouth vehemence, and his tones, naturally not pleasing, were overstrained in the heat and excitation of his feelings: but his manner, with these disadvantages, bore the stamp of sincerity. You perceived that he thought only of his cause, and not at all of himself. You felt that he was in earnest; and the adversary who could hear him speak, and refuse him the credit of honest feeling, must be strongly secured, either in the coldness of his own heart, or the consciousness of his own knavery. His language was remarkable for its force. He anglicised expressions from the Latin with remarkable energy. His taste, it is true, was not refined; but that which disfigured an unpremeditated speech, would probably not have appeared in composition..... In the house of lords he was scarcely less vehement than he had been at the bar and in the house of commons. It was singular enough to see and hear him, in his judge's robes, and surrounded by the British peerage, haranguing with more warmth of voice and gesticulation, than a demagogue delirious with the brain fever of radical reform..... In his court he was sometimes harsh and hasty, and it was supposed he decided sometimes without due deliberation. His temper, it is true, in a man of less capacity, might have led into error; but the sight of his mind was so clear and quick, that he saw the question and its solution, before another would have comprehended the terms in which it was proposed. He was unfairly harsh and intolerant to counsel, because they

were not as clear and quick-sighted as himself. His enemies impute to him an inclination to arbitrary principles. The chief cause of this imputation was his disdain of popularity. He despised it to very scorn. He never garnished the execution of his duty by those flowers and fringes of popular sentiment, meaning nothing, with which other men disguise the good they are doing the people, lest it should bring upon them the obloquy of the populace."

A third death remains to be recorded in this year — that of queen Charlotte, at Kew Palace, on the 17th of November, in the seventy-fifth year of her age. Opposite opinions would be satisfied, and, strange as it may appear, a just notion given of her character, by merely saying she was formed to be the consort of George III. She was, it has been said, chaste, decorous, and prudent. Her chastity is unquestionable, and, being a virtue of the people, is not without its merit in a queen; but her decorum was suspected of being hypocritical, and her prudence of being sordid. She accepted presents with a want of scruple which implied either personal meanness, or a return in the corrupt disposal of court honours. The precious stuffs of the East were found piled and moth-eaten in her wardrobe upon her death. Her personal property disposed of by her will was sworn under 140,000*l.*; but it was dated only the day before she died, and there had been previously a family partition of her treasure, chiefly in favour of the prince regent. She mentions her eldest daughter, the queen of Wirtemburg, in her will only as being already provided for, without the

slightest token of remembrance, or expression of kindness. This marked distinction was ascribed to a letter of the queen of Wirtemburg, in which she said that Napoleon, to whom, by the way, she was indebted for being a queen, had really the ways of a gentleman. Queen Charlotte has still her duped or canting admirers; but the spirit of the nation and of the times is changed, and a queen of England in the second quarter of the nineteenth century could hardly choose a more unhappy model.

The regent still indulged the aberrations of his fancy and taste upon upholstery and architecture. He assembled a council of professional and other *virtuosi* to deliberate on the alteration and improvement of Carlton House for the hundredth time. Pending these deliberations, the queen died; Buckingham House became disposable; and it was determined by the council to take down Carlton House altogether, and change the queen's house into a palace. This resolution proved of some moment, from the impulse given by it to architecture, which, of all the arts, has been the most encouraged in the late reign, and made at this period an amazing start in the capital.

The first session of the new parliament was opened by commission, on the 14th of January, 1819. Mr. Manners Sutton was re-elected speaker without competition, and with universal applause. The speech of the commissioners, after disposing of the king's illness and the queen's death, adverted to two foreign topics of some importance, — the evacuation of France by the allied troops, and the brilliant campaign of the preceding year in India.

A congress of the great European powers was held in the autumn of 1818, at Aix-la-Chapelle. The duke of Wellington and lord Castlereagh assisted as the representatives of England; and the chief result, as affecting British interests, was a treaty for the surrender of the French fortresses to Louis XVIII., in the month of November, after an occupation of only three years. Arrangements were also made in the treaty for the payment, by instalments, of 265,000,000 francs by France to the allied powers, upon the general winding up of accounts, in pursuance of the treaty of occupation of 1815.

An eloquent and justly self-gratulating narrative of his campaign was given by the governor-general, lord Hastings, in his reply to an address of the inhabitants of Calcutta on his return from the seat of war.* It will here suffice to say of this brilliant but remote campaign, that it extinguished the treacherous and formidable power of the Mahrattas; completely broke the robber bands of cavalry called Pindarries; and consolidated, not compromised, the security and peace of the British empire in India by new and extensive conquests.

The speech, having referred to the prospects of continued peace in Europe, and the achievements of lord Hastings in India as matters of gratification to parliament, adverted to "reductions in the military and naval services," to "considerable and progressive improvements in the most important branches of the revenue," and described the trade,

* See Ann. Reg. 1819.

commerce, and manufactures of the country as "in a most flourishing condition." Lord Lansdowne, in the house of lords, said that the retrenchments were insufficient; the public income still 14,000,000*l.* short of the public expenditure; and that, though the condition of trade, commerce, and manufactures was improved, yet public prosperity was far from being fully or firmly restored. Mr. Macdonald, in the house of commons, treated as extravagant the representations of the state of the country in the speech and address; expressed his surprise at mutual felicitations which a little sober reflection should have checked, and described the ministry with much point and truth as distinguished by egregious blunders and great military success; unable to arrive at an opinion upon such leading questions of administration as the currency, the poor laws, law reform, the catholic question, and as sustained only by the divisions of party between the public apathy on the one side, and public disgust on the other. The addresses, however, were agreed to without amendment or opposition in either house.

The death of the queen rendered it necessary to appoint in her place a guardian of the king's person. Lord Liverpool proposed the duke of York, and the propriety of the appointment was readily admitted. But a second proposition, that the duke should receive a salary of 10,000*l.* a year for this filial duty, which would have been light even to a stranger, created much opposition. "The royal duke's only duty to his afflicted father," said Mr.

Tierney, "would be to go from London or Oatlands to Windsor once or twice a week, and it was modestly proposed that he should be allowed 10,000*l.* a year for the hire of post horses. Was the duke of York in want of 10,000*l.* a year? If so, let ministers speak out, and not come to the house in this sneaking, shuffling, paltry manner." Under pretence of respect for the dignity of the crown, and of loyal reverence for the person of George III., an enormous burden was maintained under the name of the Windsor establishment. The dominant party of that day had the amazing effrontery to mock the reason and distresses of the people, and even the melancholy visitation of a person in whom the light of external sense and of internal consciousness were alike extinct, when the real and sole motive was that of ministering to the distempered avarice of the queen, the scandalous prodigalities of the duke of York, and the mean arrogance with which lords of the bedchamber and other court placemen condescend to quarter their pride and wants upon the people.

Ministers at last seemed to entertain a serious notion of the resumption of cash payments. Pressed on the one side by the increasing conviction in and out of parliament of the propriety of returning to a sound currency, on the other, by the power and artifices of what is called the monied interest, including capitalists, jobbers, Jews, and all who have an interest in the facility of discount and high prices, they manifested a sort of wavering inclintion to the former. Mr. Tierney, on the 2d of

February, moved the appointment of a select committee to enquire into the effect produced upon the foreign exchanges, and state of the circulating medium by the bank restriction, and to report whether any and what reasons existed for continuing the restriction beyond the time fixed by law for its termination. The chancellor of the exchequer moved the substitution of a *secret* committee to enquire into the state of the bank of England with reference to the expediency of the resumption of cash payments at the periods fixed by law, and other matters connected therewith, and to report such information *as may be disclosed without public injury.* The object of Mr. Tierney was a full and free enquiry, which should bind ministers to the resumption of cash payments at a specific time; that of the chancellor of the exchequer a manageable organ and vague report which should leave him at liberty to act according to circumstances. The original motion was rejected, and the amendment carried, after a short discussion, by a majority of 277 to 168, and a committee by ballot, which is but another name for ministerial nomination, was appointed. A similar committee was appointed, on the motion of lord Liverpool, in the house of lords.

Both committees made their respective reports on the 5th of April. They substantially and suspiciously coincided. It was plain that they received their inspirations from one and the same ministerial tripod. The bank, under the authority of the restriction act, and in pursuance of a notice duly given, had com-

menced the cash payment of certain notes issued prior to 1817. Both reports, greatly to the surprise of the uninitiated, recommended that, in order to promote the speedy resumption of payments in specie, the bank should be restricted from the cash payments already begun; and further, that in order to pass a bill for that purpose with the utmost expedition the standing orders should be suspended in both houses. The committee of the commons merely reported this counsel to the house, and promised to present, soon after the Christmas recess, its final report, fixing a period and recommending a plan for the final resumption of cash payments. After some strong expressions of surprise and censure by lord Grey and Mr. Tierney, the restriction bills were introduced on the following day in the house of lords by lord Harrowby, in the house of commons by Mr. Peel, carried through all their stages the same evening, and made acts by the royal assent on the following day. Whether the partial cash payments thus restricted were an experiment in the dark by the chancellor of the exchequer and the bank, or intended as a delusive ground for saying that cash payments were resumed, is not quite clear; but not a guinea left the bank which did not instantly take flight out of circulation.

Sir James Mackintosh, on the 2d of March, after a learned and luminous review of the actual state of the criminal law, with reference to capital crime, moved the appointment of a select committee to enquire into so much thereof as relates to capital punishment in felonies, and to report their observ-

ations and opinions. "The state of the case," said he, "is this: in the first or highest class of felonies, the law has been enforced in every case, in the middle class sometimes, in the lowest never. To correct this anomaly, so subversive of the great purposes of criminal jurisprudence, is the object I have in view." Lord Castlereagh, without leisure or capacity to give him the slightest right to an opinion upon the matter, talked meagre common-places, sometimes altogether void of meaning, about "the wisdom of experience" and "practical legislation," and moved the previous question. The original motion was, however, carried, on a division of 147 to 128; a result creditable both to the eloquence of the mover and the good sense of the house. The committee thus appointed examined evidence, and made a most valuable report.

The criminal courts both of Westminster and Dublin had been degraded about this period by the farcical exhibition of one of the monstrous barbarisms of English law, — the appeal of murder to trial by battle. It was now abolished by an act of the legislature.

Mr. Peel on the 2d of May made an elaborate report from the secret committee on the resumption of cash payments. The following abstract of this important document will suffice.* The committee divided their labours into two branches; — the results of their enquiries into the state of the bank of England, and their opinion with respect to the

* See Ann. Reg. 1819.

expediency of the resumption of payments in specie, at the period at which by law they are to be resumed. On the first head they stated themselves to have begun by ascertaining that the sums which the bank were liable to be called on to pay, in fulfilment of their engagements, amounted on the 30th of January last to 33,894,380*l.*, and that the bank were then in possession of government securities and other credits to the amount of 39,096,900*l.* leaving a surplus in favour of the bank of 5,202,320*l.* exclusive of the permanent debt due from government to the bank of 14,686,800*l.* repayable on the expiration of the charter. The committee then informed themselves of the amount of cash and bullion in the coffers of the bank at various periods since 1797, and of the quantity of gold coin issued by it between the 1st of January, 1817, at which period a partial resumption of cash payments had been resorted to, and the 1st of January, 1819; which was found to amount to about 6,756,000*l.* They next call the attention of the public to the amount of the debt due by it to the bank of England, which, on the 29th of April last, reached the sum of 19,438,900*l.* After a variety of details and references to evidence connected with this part of the subject, the committee add, — that the amount of its advances to the public is urged by the bank as one of the main impediments to its early resumption of cash payments; and that in order to make preparations for their resumption the bank requires a re-payment to the extent of ten millions. For such repayment, the committee earnestly re-

commend it to the house to make immediate provision, and also to establish some permanent provisions limiting and defining the authority of the bank to make advances to the government, and to purchase government securities; and bringing under the constant inspection of parliament the extent to which that authority may be in future exercised.

On the second head of enquiry, the expediency of returning to cash payments at the period fixed by law, the committee proceed to state arguments and detail evidence, from which it appears, first, that the bank have already very considerably reduced their issues of notes since the beginning of 1818; secondly, that in order to secure themselves against the effects of a return to cash payments in July next, it would be necessary for them to make a further and very sudden reduction of that portion of their currency which they have immediately within their control; thirdly, that such reduction in the present state of the trade of the country would be attended with very serious inconvenience; in consequence of which the committee recommend the further postponement of the resumption of payments in specie.

A third branch of the enquiries of the committee had for its object to ascertain the supply of gold which might be required to meet the demands upon the bank, on the resumption of payments in specie, and the practicability of commanding such supply. The evidence on this head embraces a variety of facts relative to the investment of British capital in foreign funds, the rates of exchange, and the effects likely to be produced on such rates by

the proposed resumption. On the whole, it is inferred that Great Britain has the power of commanding a metallic currency, but that the return to it ought to be gradual; and the committee conclude by recommending to the attention of parliament the following outlines of a plan for the purpose:— "That, after the 1st of May, 1821, the bank shall be liable to deliver a quantity of gold, not less than sixty ounces, of standard fineness, to be first essayed and stamped at his majesty's mint, at the established mint price of 3*l.* 17*s.* 10½*d.* per ounce, in exchange for such an amount of notes presented to them as shall represent, at that rate, the value of the gold demanded: that this liability of the bank to deliver gold in exchange for their notes shall continue for not less than two, nor more than three years, from the 1st of May, 1821; and that at the end of that period, cash payments shall be resumed: that on a day to be fixed by parliament, not later than the 1st of February, 1820, the bank shall be required to deliver gold, of standard fineness, essayed and stamped as before mentioned, in exchange for their notes (an amount of not less than sixty ounces of gold being demanded), at 4*l.* 1*s.* per ounce, that being nearly the market price of standard gold in bars, on an average of the last three months." Two bills, founded on this report, were accordingly brought in by Mr. Peel and lord Harrowby, and passed.

A bill was passed at the same time to authorise lord Camden's disinterested sacrifice of his salary of 9000*l.* a year as a sinecure teller of the Exchequer. The sanction of an act of parliament was adopted,

either because the donation might be regarded as an unconstitutional benevolence, or to give solemnity and éclat to it, as an example for other sinecurists. As an example it wholly failed.

The reduction of the army upon the termination of war had left a great number of officers ill provided, and unemployed. Many, for the most subalterns, went out to join the South American independents, against the mother-country. The Spanish ambassador in London complained of this as an infringement of the friendly relations between the governments of Spain and England; and an act was passed against enlistments, or naval equipments, for the service of any foreign potentate or power. It is just to the ministers to add, that the foreign enlistment act, though rigorous in its provisions, was not rigorously enforced.

Another act, understood to emanate personally from the regent, and creditable to his feelings, was passed at the same time, to reverse the attainder of lord Edward Fitzgerald. It would be little becoming to detract from the generosity and grace of this proceeding of the late king, though it is wonderful that royal acts of grace are so easy, so eulogised, and so few. The attainder itself, passed by the Irish parliament, was an instance of complaisant servility and infamous judgment worthy of the French convention, or the senate of Nero. Lord Edward was dead of his wounds some months, when he was subjected to a mockery of trial in the persons of his children, by the faction which then held execrable sway in Ire-

land. Mr. Curran appeared at the bar of the Irish house of commons as counsel against the bill. "I have no defensive evidence," said that unrivalled advocate and true patriot, whose eloquence and patriotism were both of the heart; "I have no case—It is impossible I should. I have often of late gone to the dungeon of the captive, but never yet have I gone to the grave of the dead for instructions to defend him; nor, in truth, have I ever before assisted at the trial of a dead man."

The epithets "gallant" and "unfortunate" are those commonly applied to lord Edward Fitzgerald. He who has discarded every advantage in the highest range of vulgar ambition, for the most generous of all inspirations, and the most perilous of all missions, and who has been faithful and brave, loved and lamented in his life and death, should not be called unfortunate. He fell, indeed, by dastardly and ignoble hands. Among his three chief captors, however, Messrs. Ryan, Swann, and Sirr, a distinction should be made. The first-named (Ryan) approached fearlessly to arrest, not murder, and lost his life in the performance of his duty.

The financial business of the session was remarkable only for the imposition of new taxes to the amount of three millions. The motive of the ministers in laying this additional burden on the people is stated by the speaker in his address to the regent, at the prorogation, as follows:—"In considering, sir, the state of our finances, and in minutely comparing our income with our expenditure, it appeared to us that the excess of our income was not fairly adequate for the purposes to which it was applicable

— the gradual reduction of the national debt. It appeared to us, that a clear available surplus of at least 5,000,000*l.* ought to be set apart for that object. This, sir, has been effected by the imposition of 3,000,000*l.* of taxes." The regent closed the session on the 13th of July, with a speech which contained the following observation on the state of the country:—"I have observed with great concern the attempts which have recently been made in some of the manufacturing districts to take advantage of circumstances of local distress to excite a spirit of disaffection to the institutions and government of the country. No object can be nearer my heart than to promote the welfare and prosperity of all classes of his majesty's subjects; but this cannot be effected without the maintenance of public order and tranquillity."

Ministers, it has been observed, indulged only in felicitations at the opening of the session. Destitute of strength of mind, they tried to shut out from the contemplation of others and their own, existing evils. Without sagacity to perceive the political and moral causes which were working around them, they cradled themselves in their imaginings of the future. One of the chief causes, and that of which they were probably least sensible, was in their own measures of administration. The government, especially of the home department, was odious and despised; the house of commons, regarded rather as the instrument of the minister than the representative organ of the people, had fallen into utter disrepute; the unretrenched luxury and pride of those who lived upon the public purse obtruded

themselves; the wealth, pomp, and political subserviency of the higher clergy were exposed and exaggerated; and low traffickers in infidelity and sedition sought subsistence or notoriety by practising with wretched publications, and still more wretched harangues, upon the distresses and discontents of the working people. The rural population, dispersed, simple minded, and passive, suffered quietly; but the working manufacturers and other congregated masses in the midland and northern districts of England, and south western part of Scotland, entered into combinations, held tumultuary public meetings, and in some instances broke out into disorder and riot. The utter and contemptuous want of confidence in the house of commons acted, perhaps, still more powerfully than the violent, yet weak, administration of the government, upon masses of population reduced to extreme misery; and the general rallying cry in harangues, resolutions, and petitions, was a radical reform of the house of commons.

The most numerous and the most formidable of these meetings were yet orderly and peaceable. There was a daring hardihood of deliberative enquiry into actual grievances and natural rights, called forth by the circumstances among a people who knew that the first of their rights was that of being the assertors and judges of their own freedom. The town of Birmingham, that vast focus of wealth, numbers, and intelligence, was unrepresented. The people, ascending from the municipal law to abstract right, assembled and appointed "a legislatorial attorney" to represent them in the house of commons;

and sir Charles Wolseley, the object of their choice, undertook to claim his seat in the house of commons. The ministers and their partisans had the shallow foppery to regard this proceeding as a mere matter of jest. They should have seen in it a practical demonstration, *ad absurdam*, that Birmingham should be represented. But lord Sidmouth was thrown into the last state of alarm by the novelty of a *female* reform association at Blackburn. He entered the field against blasphemy and sedition by proclamations and warrants. Among those held to bail was the legislative attorney of Birmingham for words spoken at Stockport.

Manchester, like Birmingham, was unrepresented. A public meeting was announced for the election of a legislatorial attorney. The magistrates made known their resolution to prohibit a meeting for a purpose obviously illegal. The originators of the meeting got over this obstruction by a mere change of title or decoration. They announced a meeting to petition for parliamentary reform. This was clearly within the law. A vast assemblage met on the 16th of August, in an open space, called Peter's Field, at Manchester. Several bodies approached in something like military order, with banners inscribed "Parliamentary Reform," "Annual Parliaments," "Universal Suffrage," "Vote by Ballot." But that which was afterwards urged as particularly ominous and alarming, was the approach of a body of male reformers, keeping time to a cracked bugle, and of two columns of female reformers, with white silk banners. The chairman of the meeting, and the hero of the day, was the same "Mr. Hunt of

Bristol," then so called, who had presided at the Spa Fields' meeting in 1817. This individual was now the chief leader of the extreme radicals. Cobbett, a man of towering talent and public effect, whose political tergiversations have been the result of his impetuous passions rather than of interested calculation, had sought shelter in America from the suspension of the habeas corpus act.* The chairman appeared in his rostrum, and began to harangue the meeting. A body of yeoman cavalry advanced at a rapid pace, and having approached the meeting, drew up to resume something like order, then dashed through the unarmed unresisting crowd, took into custody Hunt, the chairman, and another person, named Johnson, by authority of warrants in the hands of an officer of police, who accompanied them; next rushed, with intemperate fury, and with a cry "Have at their flags!" through the crowd, cutting and trampling men, women, and children, and, in about ten minutes, dispersed the assemblage, leaving several killed or mortally wounded, and

* Cobbett and Hunt have been perpetually named together. It is an absurd though established association. Cobbett is an English classic; a political writer, able and original as Swift. Hunt has no political knowledge, no intuitive political sagacity, no eloquence, no excitement even. He merely talks shrewd common-places in the vocabulary of the vulgar. No one can have observed the working people, individually or collectively, in London, Birmingham, or Manchester, without witnessing men in jackets or their shirt sleeves discussing trade and politics with the aptness of experience and reflection, and a simple and scientific propriety of expression. It is one of the wonders of 1830-31 that they could find no fitter representative of their intelligence and interests than Mr. Hunt.

between three and four hundred injured by their horses' hoofs, or the slashing of their sabres.

The intelligence no sooner arrived at Downing Street, than lord Sidmouth, upon *ex parte* and interested statements, transmitted, with a frantic and feeble precipitation, the thanks of the prince regent to the magistrates and yeomanry engaged in this horrible parody of military execution. Hunt and Johnson, and several others, arrested upon the monstrously absurd charge of high treason, were committed for "the minor offence." A feeling of indignant horror pervaded the country. It was universally denominated the Manchester massacre. Meetings were held, and addresses to the regent voted, in the cities and principal towns of England; some calling for an investigation, others further expressing the strongest condemnation of ministers. The most energetic as the most important was that of the city of London. The regent rebuked the city for prejudging the matter, and refused an enquiry. Lord Grey subsequently, in the house of lords, charged the ministers with having placed in the hands of the regent "an impertinent and flippant answer," rebuking them for prejudging after they had themselves, by transmitting the thanks of the regent, prejudged. Lord Fitzwilliam, a nobleman still more venerable for his virtues than for his years, gave the sanction of his name to a meeting of the west-riding of Yorkshire, and was immediately dismissed from the lieutenancy. The alarm of ministers may be called melancholy and ludicrous,—*flebile ludebrium*. Lord Sidmouth called out the Chelsea pensioners: and was so frightened at some old cast-

off cannon formerly used on board merchants' ships, and thrown aside by the owners as incapable, that he began his circular letter on the subject, to the lieutenants of counties, in the following strange English: — "My lord. Having been informed that there are *laying* about, throughout the kingdom, a great number of cannon," &c. He concluded with ordering the cannon, already condemned as useless even for a signal shot, to be spiked, or removed to a place of security.

The house of commons, in the first session of the sixth parliament of the United Kingdom, merited, as it eminently possessed, the contempt of the people, and yet the meeting of parliament was generally desired with impatience. It met prematurely for the despatch of business before Christmas. The prince regent, on the 23d of November, opened the session by a speech full of alarm, ominous of ministerial "vigour," and announcing an addition of 11,000 men to the military force. Lord Grey moved an amendment to the address in the house of lords. His amendment proposed to repress every disorder by giving full vigour to the law of the land, advised, at the same time, a just attention to the wants of the people, and insisted on the necessity of an enquiry into the "melancholy events" at Manchester, "in order to dispel all those feelings to which they have given birth, and to show that the measures then resorted to were the result of urgent and unavoidable necessity; that they were justified by the constitution, and that the lives of his majesty's subjects cannot be

sacrificed with impunity." The lord chancellor Eldon opposed the amendment, and more particularly the proposed enquiry, by the following truly characteristic *sorites:* — "When," said this ingenuous jurist, "I read in my law books that numbers constitute force, that force constitutes terror, and that terror constitutes illegality; I feel that no man can say that the Manchester meeting was not an illegal one." The amendment was negatived, and the address agreed to by a majority of 159 to 34. A similar amendment proposed by Mr. Tierney was long and ably debated, and with as little success, in the house of commons.

The short sitting of parliament in this year before the Christmas recess, is memorable for the fetters imposed upon all the essential political rights of Englishmen. If English liberty depended for its exercise upon the statute book, text books, and books of reports, and not upon the intimate conviction, the native instinct, of the people, that it is their inalienable right to be free, the acts now passed would introduce a despotism. Various papers containing information respecting the state of the country, but more especially bearing on the Manchester meeting, or "Manchester massacre," were laid on the tables of both houses. An imposing case was easily made out by statements, all *ex parte*, some interested, some irresponsible, and some even anonymous. The well-known "six acts" were introduced, and as ably and eloquently as they were vainly resisted in both houses. Perhaps their despotic and dangerous spirit may be best understood from the protests recorded by several

of the most distinguished members of the house of peers.*

Lord Eldon began with the least obnoxious — a bill which took away the common-law right to traverse an information or indictment from one session to the next. A clause was very opportunely proposed by lord Holland, to limit the power of the attorney-general to suspend his informations indefinitely over the heads of those who came under his displeasure, and the concession was made by ministers with a good grace. Lord Sidmouth next stated the outline of the chief measures in contemplation. Beginning with the freedom of the press, he disclaimed a previous censorship †, but proposed that all pamphlets under a given number of sheets should be subject to the newspaper duty; that the publishers should previously enter into recognisances, or give security for the payment of all penalties; and that persons convicted a second time of a blasphemous or seditious libel should be

* See Parliamentary Debates and Annual Register.

† The ministers were strongly suspected of intending to subject the press to a previous censorship, on the advice of the duke of Wellington, who wished to give Englishmen the benefit of what he found to be "a salutary control" in France. The suspicion was well founded. "It had been," said lord Sidmouth, "in consideration, *but for a moment only*, whether some step should not be taken *preliminary to publication*; but that idea was immediately discarded." The military habits and civil ignorance of the duke of Wellington may be excused; but that such a feeble human being as lord Sidmouth should dare to contemplate a censorship of the press in England, and in the nineteenth century, is almost inconceivable.

punishable by banishment or transportation. With respect to the right of meeting, he disclaimed interfering with the privilege of discussing public grievances, or petitioning the crown or either house of parliament; but proposed to enact that meetings for such purposes should be convened only upon requisition to the sheriff, borough-reeve, or other magistrate; that no stranger to the parish or place of meeting, under whatever designation, should be present; or if any stranger were detected, the magistrate might order the meeting to disperse, at the peril of the commission of felony by disobedience. He next referred to what he called the military order of movement observed by the radical reformers; and proposed that military training should be made penal, except by authority of lieutenants of counties or other magistrates. Finally, there being, he said, no doubt that the disaffected were in possession of arms, he proposed that, in what he called the disaffected districts, magistrates should have the right to enter by night or by day, forcibly or otherwise, all places suspected of containing arms, for illegal purposes, seizing such arms, and in the case of suspected persons carrying arms, to seize and detain both the arms and the individuals, with the condition of appeal to the next quarter-sessions. Lord Grey denounced these measures as a new system of government by terror and coercion.

Lord Castlereagh made an exposition in the house of commons, similar to that of lord Sidmouth in the house of lords. He was replied to by Mr. Tierney in a solemnly energetic tone. "It may,"

said he, "be said, that I use violent language. I admit it; but I do not utter a syllable which I do not, on my honour, believe. I own myself an alarmist. I am alarmed because I must trust to men who will rely on nothing against the people but brute force. I am alarmed because an attempt is made, under false pretences, to destroy all that is valuable in the constitution, unless it be defended by the free spirit of a yet free people." These measures were passed into laws substantially as introduced by ministers, the more outrageous limiting themselves to a five years' occupation of the liberties of the people; and both houses adjourned to the 15th of February.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1820.

THE reign of George IV. bears date in name and form, rather than in fact, from 1820. It was a year of much activity and extraordinary incident in England, and of portentous movement in other countries of Europe. In England, the popular agitation of the preceding summer and autumn had materially subsided. The working manufacturers found that their restive violence only recoiled upon themselves. Privation was more patiently endured as it became more familiar; and there was some decrease of the public distress. The short and easy transition from turbulence to quiet stands a convicting and decisive fact against the alarming denunciations and despotic measures of the ministry of that day. Are Englishmen the puny timid race which, being organised by thousands, as the ministers pretended, in a conspiracy to overturn the state, would yet crouch into unresisting submission on the first show of repression or danger? Would not such a conspiracy, if it had existence, expend itself in a shock of which the explosion would be terrible? Several persons, tried in the spring of this year (1820) for their share in the Manchester and other popular meetings of the preceding sum-

mer and autumn, were convicted of minor offences. No evidence appeared of the ministerial case of treasonable conspiracy.

On the 23d of January died the duke of Kent, fourth son of George III., a prince of humane and manly character, leaving behind him an infant princess, a few months old, since become heir presumptive to the crown. His complaint was pulmonary inflammation, produced by a neglected cold. On the following 28th of the same month died George III., of exhausted stamina and natural decay, without a moment of lucid faculty or physical pain to disturb his last hour. Any sketch of his character would be superfluous here. It would be but a reproduction of the passing traits scattered through the preceding pages. The public mind, too, has become better informed of his personal character and the policy of his reign. Yet is it but recently that the delusion respecting him has been even partially dispelled. The most independent English commoner, who may be designated the father of living English commoners and patriots, gave the first impulse to this reaction. It is one of the services rendered by Mr. Coke to truth and to his country. Few men have the intrepidity to launch a bold truth on the ocean of opinion.

George IV. went through the usual formalities on his accession to the throne; and the ministers of the regent, having resigned their seals of office to the king, received them back as a matter of course. The ceremonial of his accession was scarcely concluded when he was attacked with an inflammation,

similar to that which had carried off the duke of Kent; and an apprehension prevailed of the immediate succession of another new reign. His constitution, however, naturally strong, and for some time back watched with great care, soon rallied; and public curiosity in the metropolis was chiefly turned to the lying in state and funeral obsequies of the late king. The remains of George III. were deposited in that last abode of royalty in England, the vault in St. George's chapel at Windsor, on the 16th of February.

Parliament had adjourned from the 2d to the 17th of February. On that day lord Castlereagh presented a message from the crown, announcing a speedy dissolution, and recommending an immediate provision for the indispensable exigencies of the state, in the interval between the dissolution of the present, and the return of a new parliament. A similar message was delivered by lord Liverpool to the house of lords. After addresses of condolence had been voted to the king and the duchess of Kent, some strictures had been passed by the opposition on the singularity of making parliament formally acquainted with the period of its duration beforehand, and the supplies had been brought under discussion, a topic by far the most marked, not alone of the year, but of the age, in England, was incidentally touched on. The late princess of Wales, now queen of George the Fourth, was no longer prayed for in the liturgy. Mr. Hume condemned this omission. Lord Castlereagh deprecated the discussion of so delicate a matter. The members of the opposition who were in the confidence and interest of the

queen, either from want of communication with her, or the fear of acting prematurely, maintained a guarded reserve. Mr. Tierney, indeed, said that the queen was the object of ambiguous expressions within, and injurious degrading rumours without, the house, and called upon ministers to give parliament the means of judging whether the king was betrayed or the queen scandalously outraged. Mr. Brougham, who had long been the law-adviser of the princess of Wales, was more studiously reserved. He said that the omission of her name in the liturgy, and lord Castlereagh's affected designation of her as "a high personage," could not affect the legal rights of the queen; and as to injurious charges, when such were tangibly made, he should know how to deal with them. Parliament was prorogued by commission on the 28th of February, and dissolved the same day.

The prorogation speech concluded with the following words: — "If any doubt had remained as to the nature of those principles by which the peace and happiness of the nation were so seriously menaced, or of the excesses to which they were likely to lead, the flagrant and sanguinary conspiracy which has lately been detected must open the eyes of the most incredulous, and must vindicate to the whole world the justice and expediency of those measures to which you judged it necessary to resort, in defence of the laws and constitution of the kingdom." The conspiracy referred to was that of Thistlewood and his accomplices, a band of about a dozen murderous deperadoes, who were captured by the police and military, on the 23d of February, in an obscure

street called Cato-street, near the Edgware Road. Their plot was at once a horrible atrocity and a frantic chimera. It was to murder the ministers of the crown whilst sitting at a cabinet dinner at the house of lord Harrowby, then rush out drenched with blood, raise the standard of insurrection, and constitute themselves the heads of a provisional government. The plot was disclosed to the ministers, who made arrangements for surprising the savage criminals in their den, at the moment when they were to issue from it for the perpetration of their crime. Thistlewood, whose life and guilt appeared tinged with mania; Ings, a butcher; Tidd and Brunt, shoemakers, three persons of the lowest and poorest class; and Davidson, a wretched man of colour, the chiefs of this atrocious band, were convicted and executed, avowing and vindicating their design. So odious were the measures of government to the populace, and so especially execrated was the melancholy proceeding called the "Manchester massacre," which the criminals on their trials professed to avenge, that strong expressions of sympathy were indulged in by the multitude which witnessed the executions.

This was a horrible but isolated crime. To connect it in the speech of the commissioners with the political agitations of the preceding year was grossly if not wickedly disingenious. A horrid stigma was placed on the national character, when the vast masses of distressed, discontented, and, it may be conceded, seditious workmen, in the metropolitan, midland, and northern districts, were thus associated with a small murderous band, in the

hope of justifying *ex post facto*, by this accidental atrocity, bad measures and a weak cause.

The chief disclosures were made by an accomplice named Edwards, who, however, was not examined on the trial. He was denounced by the convicts on the scaffold as having instigated and entrapped them into the commission of their crime; some depositions on oath were made by others to the same effect; and ministers were called upon, particularly by alderman Wood, to bring him also to justice. It is assuredly monstrous that a wretch who seduces or instigates to the commission of guilt which would not otherwise have existed, and then denounces his duped accomplices, should receive not only impunity but reward; but still such desperate wretches as Thistlewood and his band needed no instigation. Ministers in this instance were the most competent judges, and a proper discretion was probably exercised in screening the informer.

The elections on the whole were favourable to ministers. Mr. Hobhouse was returned with sir Francis Burdett for Westmister, but it was to the exclusion of the whig candidate Mr. George Lamb; and two aldermen in the popular interest, Thorpe and Waithman, were rejected in the city of London.

The new parliament met on the 21st of April. Mr. Manners Sutton was once more re-elected without opposition to the chair. The intervening days having been employed in swearing in the members, the session was opened on the 27th by the king. His speech was studiously and judiciously vague at the opening of a new reign; and the

addresses proposed on the part of ministers were unanimously agreed to in both houses.

Mr. Grattan died during the preceding recess. Sir James Mackintosh, on moving a new writ for Dublin, pronounced upon him a high and eloquent eulogy, which was responded to from both sides of the house. Mr. Grattan was one of the intelligences of the first order which distinguished in these countries the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. He had a fearless philosophic virtue, indulgent to the weaknesses, uncompromising to the base passions of men. Pampered corporate intolerance could not disturb his peace by its peculiar and envenomed weapons of defamation and scurrility. Ascendant faction could not alarm him by its menaces or intimidate him by its power. He carried the palm of oratory in a provincial, and disputed it in an imperial parliament. Without resorting to that diversity of personage by which the arrogance of the man avenges itself for the condescensions of the politician, he was never, for an instant, vulgarised by his communion with the people. There was much of the sublime and simple in his eloquence as well as in his patriotism, yet was there also much of artifice, vanity, and affectation in both. A great deal of what he has said in his well-known character of Chatham might be applied to himself, — perhaps because he drew, not from Chatham, but from his own interior ideal standard of a patriot statesman. He yet committed some errors, — and, in reference to Ireland, — one or two which might be seriously urged.

The commencement of the session was occupied

with matters of transient political or party interest. On the 28th of June, Mr. Brougham introduced a subject of vast and permanent importance, — his plan for the education of the poor throughout England and Wales. It would be impossible to give, in passing, any adequate idea of a plan so comprehensive, so mutually dependent in its parts, and sustained by so great a variety of new and curious facts. It would be difficult even to characterise it by any adequate expression. He delineated what may be called a topographical chart of education through England, and submitted a system for giving education to a certain number of children at a certain cost, and for liberating the existing charitable endowments from abuse and misappropriation, in order to their being applied to the execution of his plan. This bill was read a first time unopposed; and postponed by mutual agreement to the succeeding session.

An effort was made, at the same time, by sir James Mackintosh, to follow up the enlightened views of sir Samuel Romilly for reforming the barbarisms of the criminal laws. The committee appointed on this subject, in the preceding session, recommended several reforms. Sir James Mackintosh, who most probably drew up the able report of the committee, submitted in accordance with its suggestions six bills: two for taking away the capital part of the offences of stealing privately in dwelling-houses, and in shops and warehouses; the third as affecting theft on navigable rivers; the fourth for repealing certain obsolete capital acts; the fifth for converting certain specified capital into

simple felonies; the sixth, and most important, for mitigating the punishment of forgery. Three of these bills — the first, fourth, and fifth — passed the house of commons intact, but were grievously maltreated and maimed, especially by the chancellor, on their way through the house of lords.

Manufacturing distress, it has been observed, was somewhat mitigated; but such was the false position into which the country had been brought by wars, subsidies, loans, and toryism, that one great division of the community could not breathe freely without reducing the other to a struggle for existence. Hitherto the pressure was chiefly upon the occupiers of the land. The owners, who saw it must soon reach them, made an effort for protection in the house of commons. Messrs. Sumner and Gooch, members for Surrey and Suffolk, moved and seconded the appointment of a select committee to enquire into the state of agricultural distress, as set forth in the petitions presented to the house. Both the mover and the seconder objected chiefly to the fallacious mode in which the averages were returned, not to the protecting bill of the preceding year. The farmer, they said, was receiving only 72*s*., when he was supposed to be receiving 80*s*. a quarter, the protecting price against foreign importation. Mr. Frankland Lewis, in an able speech, supported the motion, but with a view to more extensive and profound enquiry. The question was supported by Mr. Western and Mr. Brougham, opposed by Mr. Robinson (lord Goderich), Mr. Huskisson, Mr. Ricardo, Mr. Coke, lord Milton, and the ministers. An adjourned debate was expected,

and several of the treasury corps thought they might retire for the night. The discussion was protracted to four o'clock in the morning; when the motion was carried, to the astonishment of its supporters, by a majority of 150 to 101. This vote, however, was subsequently in a great measure neutralised by an instruction to the committee limiting them to a consideration merely of the averages.

It is one advantage of public distress, in a country where the people are intelligent and enterprising, and discussion free, that it hastens the developement of the true principles of commerce. The tables of both houses were loaded with petitions for a free trade. The ship-owners, with others interested in monopoly, were, it is true, equally if not more active; besieging, however, the ministers rather than the parliament. The general subject was brought before the house of lords by lord Lansdowne, on the 26th of May. After an exposition of his views, in a speech of superior ability and information, he moved the appointment of a committee to consider the means of extending the foreign trade of the country. His leading principles were, to abolish all duties absolutely prohibitory; relax the navigation laws; especially cultivate trade with France; and open the East India monopoly. The motion, after an able speech from lord Liverpool, in which he rather disserted on the subject than replied to lord Lansdowne, was agreed to; and towards the close of the session, Mr. Wallace, vice-president of the board of trade, introduced into the house of commons a measure for a sub-

stantial relaxation of the navigation laws and warehousing system, which passed into a law.

The civil list, after the rejection of a motion made by lord John Russell for enquiry, was settled at 1,057,000*l.* The budget of the year was next introduced by the chancellor of the exchequer. It was chiefly distinguished by his borrowing 5,000,000*l.* by private contract, and 12,000,000*l.* from that now contemned delusion the sinking fund. Mr. Vansittart, whilst he thus laid impious hands on the sacred fund, gave the existing generation the consoling assurance of his arithmetic, that the public debt would be paid off by the sinking fund in exactly forty-seven years!

The public mind was now engaged and excited by one engrossing topic — the mutual declaration of war between George IV. and his consort. The queen's movements from the Alps towards England, during the latter part of the month of May, were announced by her friends with menacing triumph, and watched by her husband and his friends, like the advance of an invading enemy, with much bravado and other manifest signs of fear.

It is necessary to advert for a moment to some preceding circumstances.

The degradation of the princess of Wales, it has been observed, was contemplated two years before, and abandoned only through the remonstrances of her daughter. The princess Charlotte was not long dead when the project was revived. In 1818, Messrs. Cooke and Powell, the one a barrister, the other an attorney, were charged with a secret commission to take evidence in Italy respecting the

conduct of the princess of Wales. Arrived at Milan, they were joined there by two other agents — colonel Browne, an Englishman, well acquainted with the language and character of the people, and an Italian named Vimercati. This commission sat for a considerable time, and collected a great mass of evidence. The princess of Wales, upon learning that persons were thus employed in purveying charges against her, complained publicly, by letters printed both in English and foreign newspapers, that she was beset by spies and calumniators; that attempts were made to suborn her servants against her; that her bureau was broken open and robbed of papers; and that her life was attempted by poison.

Her situation at the time was distressing in the extreme. She was repelled by foreign courts, insulted by English ambassadors and other diplomatic agents, and avoided by such English travellers as had pretensions to be received at the court of her husband. It was rumoured through Europe that she lived in a state of the coarsest profligacy with a paramour whom she had raised from the situation of her travelling courier to that of her chamberlain. These imputations might be well-founded; but they might also be — what she proclaimed them — the result of an organised system of defamation by which she was constantly beset. She bore them with an astonishing passiveness, which may be construed either into abandoned, shameless depravation, or conscious innocence and great force of character.

Mr. Brougham possessed the confidence of the

princess of Wales, both as her law adviser and her friend. In the summer of 1819, he made a proposition, or threw out a suggestion, to lord Liverpool, the substance of which was, that the actual income of the princess*, instead of terminating with the demise of the crown, should be secured to her for her life, upon the condition, on her part, that she should reside abroad; and that, in the event of her husband's accession, she should not assume the title of queen of England. He declared to lord Liverpool that this suggestion came solely from himself, and that he could not answer for its being approved by the princess: it was, however, very plainly insinuated, if not openly asserted afterwards, on the other side, that he had an understanding with her. But, whether he had or not, the step taken by him should not be regarded as a presumption of her consciousness, or his belief of her guilt; for the matter dropped, not from any disinclination on the part of the government, but because Mr. Brougham manifested no decided wish to proceed with it.

The accession of her husband placed the princess in a new and curious situation. Abroad, she was slighted and mortified more than ever. She had ceased to be princess of Wales, and, not having been duly announced, was not recognised as queen of England. But neither the forms of diplomacy abroad, nor the regal power and hatred of her husband at home, could deprive her of the new and important rights with which she became invested as queen

* The allowance voted to the princess of Wales in 1814 was 50,000*l.*, of which, by the advice of Mr. Whitbread and Mr. Brougham, she accepted only 35,000*l.* a year.

consort. George IV. had hardly placed the crown upon his head, when he proposed to his cabinet to commence proceedings against her. His object was a divorce; but, by the process contemplated, she would be put upon her trial for high treason. The ministers had before them at this time the whole of the evidence taken by the Milan commissioners, but they still declined proceeding; and, finding the king intractable, tendered their resignations. For twenty-four hours the crown was without responsible ministers: an attempt to form an administration under lord Wellesley failed, and the former ministers were reinstated.

The first overt act against the queen was the exclusion of her name from the liturgy in its new form. She addressed a letter of remonstrance to lord Liverpool; and, receiving no satisfactory answer, soon resolved to face her accusers. Mr. Brougham received her commands to meet her in France. He left London on the 1st of June, with the following proposition to the queen, placed in his hands by lord Liverpool: — "The king is willing to recommend to parliament to enable his majesty to settle an annuity of 50,000*l.* a year upon the queen, to be enjoyed by her during her natural life, and in lieu of any claim in the nature of jointure or otherwise; provided she will engage not to come into any part of the British dominions, and provided she engages to take some other name or title than that of queen, and not to exercise any of the rights or privileges of queen, other than with respect to the appointment of law officers, or to any proceedings in courts of justice. The annuity to cease upon the violation

of these engagements, viz. upon her coming into any part of the British dominions; or her assuming the title of queen; or her exercising any of the rights or privileges of queen, other than above excepted, after the annuity shall have been settled upon her."

Lord Hutchinson had relations of friendly confidence both with the king and queen; he undertook to accompany Mr. Brougham as a mediator. They arrived at St. Omer's on the 3d of June. Mr. Brougham immediately waited on the queen; but, instead of submitting to her the proposition placed in his hands, informed her that he came accompanied by lord Hutchinson, who had a proposal to make to her on the part of the king. The queen instantly demanded, through Mr. Brougham, that lord Hutchinson should submit his proposition in writing. Lord Hutchinson, in reply, said he had with him only memoranda upon separate scraps of paper; and intimated expressly, or by implication, his wish to communicate verbally. The queen sent him the following rejoinder: — "Mr. Brougham is commanded by the queen to express to lord Hutchinson her majesty's surprise at his lordship not being ready to state the terms of the proposition of which he is the bearer; but, as lord Hutchinson is desirous of a few hours' delay, her majesty will wait until five o'clock, in the expectation of receiving a communication from his lordship before that hour. Two o'clock, June 4. 1820." Lord Hutchinson, only a few minutes within the time, made his inauspicious attempt at mediation by the following letter: —

" Sir,

" In obedience to the commands of the queen, I have to inform you, that I am not in possession of any proposition or propositions, detailed in a specific form of words, which I could lay before her majesty; but I can detail to you, for her information, *the substance of many conversations held with lord Liverpool.* His majesty's ministers propose that 50,000*l. per annum* should be settled on the queen for life, subject to such conditions as the king may impose. I have also reason to know that the conditions likely to be imposed by his majesty are, that the queen is not to assume the style and title of queen of England, or any title attached to the royal family of England. A condition is also to be attached to this grant, that she is not to reside in any part of the United Kingdom, or even to visit England. The consequence of such a visit will be an immediate message to parliament, and an entire end to all compromise and negotiation. I believe that there is no other condition — I am sure none of any importance. I think it right to send to you an extract of a letter from lord Liverpool to me: his words are, — ' It is material that her majesty should know confidentially, that, if she be *so ill-advised* as to come over to this country, there must then be *an end to all negotiation and compromise.* The decision, I may say, is taken, to proceed against her as soon as she sets her foot on the British shores.' I cannot conclude this letter without my humble, though serious and sincere, supplication, that her majesty will take these propositions into her most calm consideration, and not act with any

hurry or precipitation on so important a subject. I hope that my advice will not be misinterpreted: I can have no possible interest which would induce me to give fallacious counsel to the queen. But, let the event be what it may, I shall console myself with the reflection that I have performed a painful duty *imposed upon me* to the best of my judgment and conscience, and in a case in the decision of which the king, queen, the government, and the people of England, are materially interested. Having done so, I fear neither obloquy nor misrepresentation. I certainly should not have wished to have brought matters to so precipitate a conclusion; but it is her majesty's decision, and not mine. I am conscious that I have performed my duty towards her with every possible degree of feeling and delicacy. I have been obliged to make use of your brother's hand, as I write with pain and difficulty; and the queen has refused to give any, even the shortest delay.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"HUTCHINSON."

A rejection, in the following terms, was communicated to him on the instant: — "Mr. Brougham is commanded by the queen to acknowledge the receipt of lord Hutchinson's letter; and to inform his lordship that it is quite impossible for her majesty to listen to such a proposition. Five o'clock, June 4. 1820." Lord Hutchinson, who appears to have been wholly unprepared for so peremptory a refusal, attempted to renew the negotiation by the following note to Mr. Brougham: —

"St. Omer's, five o'clock, June 4. 1820.

"My dear Sir,

"I should wish that you would enter into a more detailed explanation; but, to show you my anxious and sincere wish for an accommodation, I am willing to send a courier to England to ask for further instructions, provided her majesty will communicate to you whether any part of the proposition which I have made would be acceptable to her: and, if there is any thing which she may wish to offer to the English government, on her part, I am willing to make myself the medium through which it may pass.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"HUTCHINSON."

The queen having discharged her foreign suite, including her chamberlain and supposed paramour, Bergami, had left St. Omer's an hour before, attended by lady Hamilton and alderman Wood, and was proceeding, as fast as French post-horses could carry her, by the Calais road towards England. The letter of lord Hutchinson, despatched after her by Mr. Brougham, found her on board the Calais packet. It was earnest and conciliating. Mr. Brougham also attempted by direct counsel, and even supplication, to dissuade her from proceding to England. "Once more," said he, in a letter enclosing lord Hutchinson's, "I most earnestly implore your majesty to refrain from rushing into certain trouble and possible danger; or, at least, to delay taking the step until lord Hutchinson shall have received fresh instructions." The queen was resolute, declared in

reply that she saw no reason for changing her purpose, and sailed for Dover.

Lord Hutchinson's unlucky mission subjected him to much popular obloquy at the time. There appears not the slightest ground for any imputation upon the motives of that gallant and truly honourable person; but nothing could be more clumsily imagined than the commission with which he was charged. It was conceived with an utter disregard of the known spirit and character of the princess who was its object. How lord Liverpool could be the author, and lord Hutchinson become the vehicle, of an experimental threat to one of the most fearless of women, is unaccountable. Mr. Brougham also had his share in the obloquy of this contemptible negotiation. It was asked repeatedly, and pointedly, why he withheld from the queen all knowledge of the proposition placed in his hands by lord Liverpool. He gave no distinct explanation. Private and unforeseen casualties, he said, prevented his communicating it; but what the circumstances were he never stated.

Mr. Brougham was accused of attempting a politic, if not a double game; to win over the queen to a compromise of which he might make a merit with the king. The supposition was not merely improbable, but absurd. A man fully conscious of his great faculties, maintaining a certain independence, not merely of power but of party, obviously and systematically building the fabric of his ambition and renown upon the public effect of his popular and indefatigable genius; — such a man could not, without momentary infatuation, court fortune with the arts of a vice-chamberlain or lord

of the bedchamber. The mission to St. Omer's, however, is, to a certain extent, involved in mystery; and an understanding of silence on the subject is said to exist still between lords Hutchinson and Brougham.

Mr. Brougham evidently found the queen in an uncompromising temper, for which he was unprepared. The change was ascribed to the counsels of alderman Wood, who had joined her at Montbard. The alderman incurred the responsibility with some, and obtained the *éclat* with others, of having defeated the embassy to St. Omer's. It would appear that he even thwarted and piqued Mr. Brougham; who retaliated only by a sarcasm in a milder form upon his friend. He spoke of "certain counsels not characterised by absolute wisdom;" and the appellative of "absolute wisdom" long adhered to the alderman.

The queen, after a peregrination of six years, which proved fatal to her happiness, and, even supposing the accusation against her false, discreditable to her memory, landed at Dover, on the 6th of June. Neither the king nor his ministers contemplated her arrival; no orders were sent to Dover; and the commandant received her with a royal salute. Had this ceremony been omitted, the vast multitude, the banners, the shouts, and the real enthusiasm which met her on the beach, would have consoled her. From Dover to London, her journey was a continually increasing triumphant procession. The metropolis poured out its vast population, as if to give her assurance that she had friends. The procession went along Pall Mall, — halted for a moment, acci-

dentally or from design, before Carlton House, — and shouted its clamorous exultation in the ears of her husband. It was said that he saw her from one of the upper windows, and remarked, in terms of levity and aversion, how well she looked. No residence was prepared for her; and she proceeded to the house of alderman Wood, in South Audley Street.

The hearts of the ministers now quailed within them. An exhibition by which the country would be agitated, and the crown dishonoured, seemed inevitable; and they had the effrontery to say that it was forced on them. The ministers, on the contrary, brought it on themselves. With the whole case before them in February, they declined proceeding against the queen, on the ground that the case was insufficient. Having before them only the same evidence in May, they offered a compromise, accompanied with the express and threatened alternative of proceeding against her: they negotiated the compromise with such bungling folly as almost to ensure its failure; — this because they had not sufficient honesty and firmness to prefer their convictions, consistency, and public duty, to the personal caprices and despotic will of the sovereign; — and yet they continued to assert that the proceeding was forced on them.

The queen's rejection of the terms proposed to her, and her arrival at Calais, on her way to England, were communicated from Dover by telegraph on the evening of the 5th of June. Ministers deliberated in a cabinet council during several hours of the night, and the whole morning of the 6th. The result of the cabinet meetings was, that, whilst the

queen proceeded with her triumphant escort from Dover, the king on his side took the field. Parliament was sitting at the time. He went in state to give the royal assent to such bills as had passed both houses; and, having gone through this ceremony, left lord Liverpool charged with the following message, to be immediately on his departure delivered to the house of lords: —

"George R. The king thinks it necessary, in consequence of the arrival of the queen, to communicate to the house of lords certain papers respecting the conduct of her majesty since her departure from this kingdom, which he recommends to the immediate and serious attention of this house.

"The king has felt the most anxious desire to avert the necessity of disclosures and discussions, which must be as painful to his people as they can be to himself; but the step now taken by the queen leaves him no alternative.

"The king has the fullest confidence that, in consequence of this communication, the house of lords will adopt that course of proceeding which the justice of the case, and the honour and dignity of his majesty's crown, may require.

"GEORGE R."

The papers referred to were laid on the table under seal, in a green bag. A similar message and sealed bag were presented to the house of commons by lord Castlereagh. Both ministers announced the intention to move an address to the king, and the reference of the papers to a secret committee on the following day. A solemn silence was observed by the lords, probably from an impression

that their house would be constituted a high court to try the queen. In the house of commons several opposition members expressed themselves with great vehemence, but briefly, and without result.

The proceedings of both houses on the 7th were looked to with the deepest interest. Lord Liverpool having moved a ceremonial address, which contained no pledge or opinion, proposed that the papers on the table should be submitted to a secret committee of fifteen peers, to be appointed by ballot. It was presumed hitherto that the course to be pursued against the queen was an impeachment for treasonable conspiracy. Lord Liverpool announced that such a course could not be adopted. The queen's alleged partner in guilt, Bergami, an alien, was not amenable as a traitor to the crown of England: to constitute conspiracy there must be at least two criminals; and the queen, therefore, could not be accused of having conspired. The proceeding by impeachment was understood to have been already adopted in the cabinet, when this new and obvious light fortunately crossed the mind of the chancellor. The address was agreed to without opposition, and the secret committee appointed by ballot on the following day. Lords Erskine and Lansdowne were appointed, but withdrew their names.

In the house of commons there was much more excitement. When the time came for the minister's proposing the consideration of the king's message, he was anticipated by Mr. Brougham, who presented a message from the queen. It set forth in substance that she had returned to England for the purpose of maintaining her innocence and rights; protested

against a secret tribunal appointed by her accusers; complained of her various wrongs from foreign governments influenced by that of England, and from English ambassadors and other diplomatic agents; and finally appealed to the justice of the house of commons. The reading of this communication by Mr. Brougham was followed by animated cheers from the opposition. Lord Castlereagh immediately rose. He declared that the ministers were neither persecutors nor prosecutors; that the king's communication was most gracious; that the secret committee was but a preliminary to ascertain whether there was any case to proceed on; and that the conduct of "an illustrious personage" [he studiously withheld the name of queen,] should not be judged without an open enquiry and examination of witnesses. Mr. Brougham argued with great earnestness against a secret committee, which, though not final, must, he contended, deeply affect the fame and honour of the queen. The most material observation which fell from him was, that, though solicitous for a private, amicable, and honourable adjustment, he had counselled the queen to reject the proposition of lord Hutchinson at St. Omer's. Mr. Canning replied to Mr. Brougham, and vindicated the propositions made to the queen with the eloquence of strong personal feeling. The condition of assuming some other title than that of queen implied, he said, no abdication of substantial rights, or admission of unworthiness; and as to her residing abroad, he had himself, in 1814, when honoured with her confidence, advised her, in the utter hopelessness of a reconciliation, to reside abroad with

her family, or in any other society which she might select; and there was no society in Europe of which she would not be "the grace, life, and ornament." — "The honourable gentleman," said Mr. Canning, "called upon the government to come forward frankly, and at once, as her majesty's accusers. I for one," continued he, "will never, so help me God, place myself in the situation of her accuser."

Mr. Canning concluded with declaring that he should take no further share in the deliberations on the subject. He did interfere once more in the same tone of respect and kindness towards the queen; but, when the cabinet finally resolved to proceed against her, he resigned his office.

After the discussion had proceeded for some time with much animation, Mr. Wilberforce interfered, with a motion to adjourn the question to the next day but one, in the hope that during this interval a disgusting investigation, which would taint the public morals, and degrade the two parties interested, might be prevented by some amicable arrangement. His motion was agreed to, and the ma ter for the present ended.

The whole of the first, and nearly the whole of the second day, passed without any overture on either side. The king, with the obstinacy of weak character, would not be the first to propose a compromise; and the queen, on her side, was reluctant to make the first offer, lest she should appear to distrust her cause. Yielding, however, to the advice of her friends, she made an overture to lord Liverpool, through Mr. Brougham. The substance of her communication was, that,

deferring to the expressed opinion of the house of commons, she was ready to consider any arrangement consistent with her dignity and honour. Lord Liverpool, in reply, referred her to the memorandum placed in the hands of Mr. Brougham. The queen rejoined, that this memorandum, which lord Hutchinson's proposition had superseded, was now submitted to her for the first time; and added, that the recognition of her rank and privileges as queen must be the basis of any arrangement which would be made. Lord Liverpool, in answer, expressed his surprise that his memorandum had not been sooner communicated to her; and declared that any proposition on the king's part must have for its basis the queen's residence abroad. The queen next declared that, "her dignity and honour being secured, she was willing to leave every thing to the decision of any person or persons of high station and character, whom both parties may concur in naming, and who should have authority to prescribe the particulars as to residence, patronage, and income, subject of course to the approbation of parliament." Lord Liverpool accepted this proposal, but with the reservation that any arrangement should be subject to the king's pleasure; and took occasion to make the startling assertion that the memorandum delivered to Mr. Brougham at his setting out for St. Omer's contained the only proposition to the queen which the king had authorised. Was lord Hutchinson, then, an unaccredited volunteer? Were those memoranda on separate scraps of paper, to which he referred as containing his instructions, no authority? What was that letter of lord Liverpool himself, which lord Hutchinson

cited in his propositions to the queen, but a letter of instructions?

The consideration of the king's message was further adjourned pending this negotiation. The duke of Wellington and lord Castlereagh were appointed on behalf of the king, Mr. Brougham and Mr. Denman on the part of the queen, to consider an arrangement of the matters in dispute. They met for the first time on the 15th of June, at the house of lord Castlereagh, in St. James's Square. The protocol of the first conference, at its very opening, set forth that "the queen must not be understood to admit, nor the king to retract, any thing;" and having established this insuperable barrier, the negotiators, with amazing simplicity, continued to beat their breasts against it, through five mortal conferences, and as many days, without the remotest chance of coming together. It was contended *in limine* on behalf of the queen, and refused on behalf of the king, that her name should be restored to the liturgy; and upon this point both parties were immoveable.

The failure of the attempt to arbitrate was announced to the house of commons on the 19th of June. Mr. Wilberforce gave notice of a motion on the subject for the following day; and, when his time for making it came, requested and obtained further delay. Several members pressed him in vain to state the nature of his proposition, even in general terms. The utmost that could be obtained from him was an offer to communicate his secret privately to one member. He selected lord Archibald Hamilton for the depository of his mysterious

confidence; but the offer was not accepted. On the 22d of June Mr. Wilberforce disclosed his plan. It was an unpromising, and, considering the mystery in which it was enveloped, a laughable commonplace, comprised in two resolutions;—the first expressing the regret of the house at the failure of the recent attempts; the second, soliciting the queen to gratify the house by conceding a point or two, for the sake of an amicable arrangement. Lord Archibald Hamilton proposed an amendment, the object of which was the insertion of the queen's name in the liturgy. After an animated debate, in which sir Francis Burdett distinguished himself, the original motion, supported of course by the ministers, was carried, by a majority of 391 to 134.

A deputation, composed of Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Bankes, Mr. Stuart Wortley, and sir Thomas Acland, waited on the queen with the resolutions of the house. Their expedition was truly ignominious. The queen declined complying with their recommendation; and on their way they were hissed and hooted by the populace. The object of Mr. Wilberforce was, that the queen should abandon the insertion of her name in the liturgy. Coming from a ministerial partisan, or from a man whose piety did not rise above the worldly standard, this proposition would have been consistent. But when Mr. Wilberforce proposed, and the party called saints strenuously recommended, that the queen should abandon the spiritual comfort of the prayers of the people, they afforded another melancholy proof how little truth there is among men, after due allowance made for human infirmity and human imposture. All

hope of an adjustment having now vanished, the house of commons, on the motion of Lord Castlereagh, voted a further adjournment, in order to leave the initiative of proceedings to the house of lords.

The discussions in parliament, the negotiations out of it, the publication of what may be called the diplomatic correspondence, and of the minutes, affectedly called protocols, of the five conferences,—in short, every day and hour of delay, strengthened the position, increased and emboldened the partisans, and inflamed the courage of the queen. All that portion of the press of the country which was not condemned to toil at the tail of the administration, which was free to choose its party from motives of honest conviction, or in a spirit of independent trading speculation, advocated her cause with ardour. The kingdom became one vast arena of dispute. Extrinsic passions combined with those inherent in the question, and reason was seldom heard. But the queen had with her the more generous impulses and higher passions which agitate masses; whilst the king and his ministers were chiefly sustained by the influence of government patronage, the hireling malice and mendacity of court satellites, the subservient ambition of the higher, and the aspiring scurrility of the lower clergy.

On the 26th of June, whilst the secret committee was still sitting, lord Dacre presented a petition from the queen, in which she protested against any secret enquiry, demanded time to bring her witnesses from abroad, and requested to be heard by her counsel. Messrs. Brougham, Denman, and Williams presented themselves at the bar. The two first

spoke with great energy of the hardships of the queen's case, and the necessity of delay. On the 4th of July the secret committee made its report. Lord Dacre next day presented a petition from the queen, to be heard against it by her counsel. This was refused; and lord Liverpool, in pursuance of the report, brought in a bill of pains and penalties. It was entitled "An act to deprive her majesty queen Caroline Amelia Elizabeth of the title, prerogatives, rights, privileges, and exemptions of queen consort of this realm, and to dissolve the marriage between his majesty and the said Caroline Amelia Elizabeth." The bill was read a first time, and a copy ordered to be sent to the queen. She received it from the hand of sir Thomas Tyrwhitt, the usher of the black rod, with the following ambiguous remark:—"It is too late, sir Thomas; twenty-five years ago it might have been of some use to his majesty." According to some she spoke in a tone of emotion and distress; according to others,—and with perhaps more consistency,—she expressed herself in a tone of malicious pleasantry and good humour.

The first reading having taken place, counsel were heard on behalf of the queen; but with the restriction that they should limit themselves to the time and mode of proceeding. Mr. Brougham's speech within this perilous boundary, and perpetually disturbed by lord Eldon, was a perfect *tour de force* in the art of advocacy. The second reading was fixed for the 17th of August. On the 11th of July the queen petitioned, and on the 14th lord Erskine moved, that she should be furnished with a list of

the witnesses against her. This advantage she would have had of right, in common with every other British subject, were the form of proceeding an indictment or impeachment for treason. But the majority of the lords, under the direction of lord Eldon, took advantage of the legal technicality to withhold from her the great ægis of the subject against perjured witnesses, and the power and passions of the crown. A specification of the charges, which she declared was necessary for enabling her to produce defensive evidence, was also refused.

If any hopes of pacification now remained, they were put to flight by the queen's "Letter to the King," — a vehement tirade, which recapitulated her wrongs, past and present, and attacked, with much rhetorical force and bitterness, her husband, his ministers, and even the two houses of parliament, against whose jurisdiction as a tribunal she protested. "Even," said she, "on the slave-mart the cries of 'Oh! my mother, my mother! Oh! my child, my child!' have prevented a separation of the victims of avarice; but your advisers, more inhuman than the slave-dealers, remorselessly tore the mother from the child. . . . . Your court was the scene, not of polished manners and refined intercourse, but of low intrigue and scurrility. Spies, bacchanalian tale-bearers, and foul conspirators, swarmed," &c. Speaking of the house of lords, she says, — "To regard such a body *as a court of justice*, would be to calumniate that sacred name; and for me to suppress the expression of my opinion would be to lend myself to my own destruction, and to an imposition on the nation and the world." . . . .

I protest against this species of trial. I demand a trial in a court where the jurors are taken impartially from among the people, and the proceedings are open and fair. . . . . I will not, except compelled by actual force, submit to any sentence not pronounced by a court of justice."

The house of lords met, after an adjournment of some days, to discuss the second reading on the 17th of August. The duke of Leinster moved that the order of the day for the second reading of the bill of pains and penalties should be rescinded. This motion was negatived, and counsel were called in. The counsel in support of the bill were the king's attorney and solicitor-general (sir Robert Gifford and sir John Copley), the king's advocate (sir C. Robinson), Dr. Adams and Mr. Parke; against it, Mr. Brougham and Mr. Denman (the queen's attorney and solicitor-general), Dr. Lushington, and Messrs. Williams, Tindal, and Wilde. Mr. Brougham and Mr. Denman were heard against the bill. Their respective arguments may be perused with interest as models of the first order in different styles of judiciary eloquence. Mr. Denman was interrupted for a moment by a general movement around him: it was caused by the presence of the queen, who came for the first time unexpectedly to witness the proceedings. The king's attorney and solicitor replied with much ability.

On the 19th of August, lords Grey and King made successive attempts, by motions, to quash the investigation. The respective divisions were 181 to 65, and 179 to 64. The attorney-general, after

these divisions had taken place, stated his case in support of the bill. His statement occupied two days, the 19th and 21st of August. The close of it was drowned by the drums, trumpets, and tumultuous acclamations which announced the approach of the queen. The examination of witnesses immediately began, and soon produced a remarkable incident. The queen, upon hearing the clerk of the house call the name of Teodoro Majocchi, the third witness, started from her seat with an indistinct cry, and retired from the scene. He had been her servant; and her cry, instead of proceeding from conscious guilt taken by surprise, may have been a movement of disgust and indignation at his ungrateful treachery.

The records of this scandalous investigation, including both the questions and answers, are utterly intangible. A viler mass of contaminating details, moral and physical, was never condemned to expurgation since the art of printing was invented. On the 7th of September the case against the queen was closed. An adjournment took place, to allow the necessary time for preparation to the other side. On the 3d of October Mr. Brougham stated the queen's defence at great length, and with surpassing power. He was ably followed by Mr. Williams on the same side. The examination of the queen's witnesses continued to the 24th of October. An Italian witness, named Rastelli, was examined in support of the bill. Upon application by the counsel for the queen to have him produced for further examination, it proved that he had been sent back to Italy. His absence was regarded

as an instance of impudently criminal chicanery. Lord Liverpool and the law officers disclaimed all knowledge of the matter; and the whole responsibility was fixed upon the attorney for the bill. That person declared that he did not know Rastelli would be wanted; that he sent him home to quiet the fears of the families of the other Italian witnesses; that he wrote to colonel Brown to send him back with all speed, and was informed by the colonel, in answer, that Rastelli was suffering from fever and jaundice, and had, moreover, an insuperable horror of the sea.

The evidence against the bill being closed, Mr. Denman went over the case, not only with distinguished eloquence, but with a freedom and fearlessness which reached the utmost license of defence. He discarded the king to deal only with the accusing husband, whom he exhibited with all his self-disqualifying unworthiness, as a complainant and an accuser, upon his head. The duke of Clarence was among the most earnest supporters of the bill. He was understood to have spoken privately in the most injurious terms of the queen. Mr. Denman apostrophised him in an elaborate, energetic, unparalleled diatribe. William IV. has more than forgotten the resentments of the duke of Clarence. By separating the advocate from the man, and making Mr. Denman his first law-officer, he has given an example of superior sense and magnanimity surpassing the trite one of Louis XII. Dr. Lushington followed on the same side. The king's attorney and solicitor occupied four days — the 27th, 28th, 29th, and 30th — in replying. All the

counsel on both sides who spoke, eminently distinguished themselves. It was, perhaps, the first time that English lawyers appeared on a level with a great case, at the trial of which the nation might be said to look on. The case of Warren Hastings was a parliamentary, not a forensic proceeding; and the seven bishops were but poorly defended, though lord Somers was one of their counsel.

The examination of witnesses and the addresses of counsel having been brought to a close, the discussion on the second reading of the bill began on the 2d, and continued by adjournment to the 6th of November. It was then read a second time, by a majority of 123 to 95. Lord Dacre was charged by the queen with a protest, which he presented to the house. The queen not having appeared in person at the bar, it was received only as her representation of her case. The house having gone into committee, a discussion took place on the divorce clause. Some bishops, and other supporters of the bill, resisted this clause from religious scruples, or the dread of recrimination by the queen upon her husband, of which a significant hypothetical menace was thrown out at the commencement of the proceedings by Mr. Brougham. But the opposition peers voted for it; and it was carried by a majority of 120 to 62. This majority, the result of a parliamentary manœuvre, proved fatal on the third reading. Many peers, who would have voted for the bill without, voted against it with the divorce clause; and, on the 10th of November, it was read a third time by a disheartening majority of 108 to 99. The queen petitioned to be heard by counsel

against its passing. Lord Liverpool, in reply, declared that, with so small a majority in the actual state of the public feeling, he and his colleagues abandoned the bill. The house adjourned over to the 26th of November. In the interval the queen demanded, and was refused, a royal palace for her residence. On the 26th, after the routine business of the house of commons had been gone through, Mr. Denman rose to present a message from the queen on the subject of this refusal. He had but just commenced reading it, when the usher of the black rod presented himself at the bar. His appearance caused an explosion of loud and tumultuous murmurs. His lips moved, but not a word spoken by him could be heard. The speaker, however, left the chair, — paced the floor amidst cries of shame, and other exclamations of more distinct import, — proceeded to the house of lords with the ministers and their friends in his train, and was informed that the session of parliament was prorogued. Thus ended, in defeat and disgrace, the domestic war which George IV. carried on, for twenty-five years, against his unhappy consort.

The guilt and innocence of the queen have been not only asserted, but believed with equal confidence. An opinion upon the subject is uncalled for here. It should, however, be remarked, in justice to her memory, that much of the evidence against her was tainted with corrupt practice and perjury to the very core. Another general remark suggests itself in her favour. If, as her accusers charged her, she indulged her infatuated passion for her menial paramour, with an utter disregard of common

vigilance as well as common shame, how was it that her accusers, with as great facilities and as little scruple as ever existed in such a case, could produce against her only circumstantial evidence? She appears, it is true, to have been a woman of coarse mind and unfeminine demeanour; but much of this must have been superinduced by the revolting grossnesses which had been associated, however falsely, with her person and character. In the contaminating investigations through which she had been so frequently and publicly dragged, she had lost that unsullied, delicate freshness of reputation and respect, which is not only the great social charm, but the great safeguard of innocence in the sex. But, whether the charges against her were false or true, the result was a popular triumph which reflects eternal honour on the middle classes of the English people. That right-minded mass of the democracy of England interfered to shield an unprotected woman against the hatred of a husband, the power of a king, and the unworthy arts of ministers; who, in this instance, acted rather as the slaves of a tyrannical will than as the constitutional advisers of a limited monarch.

CHAP. XXVIII.

1821—1824.

THE session of parliament commenced on the 23d of January: it was opened by the king in person, with a speech characterised by a crest-fallen moderation. The references to domestic affairs were, on the whole, satisfactory or inoffensive; and, in alluding to recent events abroad, he stated that his great object should be the continuance of the blessings of peace to his people.

Addresses were carried without opposition in both houses. The principal subject of observation was the foreign policy of the country. Southern Europe had been the theatre of great movements during the preceding year: there was a general effort to throw off the system of despotism by divine right, to which the holy alliance had given the hypocritical designation of "paternal government." In Spain, more favourable circumstances enabled Quiroga and Riego to effect that in which Porlier and Lacy had failed, — the restoration of the cortes and the constitution. The impulse and example of Spain soon communicated themselves to Portugal and Italy; and, in the two great European peninsulas, constitutional freedom was established with a bloodless facility, which should have left no doubt that the people desired and deserved it. It was

only in Italy that peace and liberty appeared in peril from foreign interference: Austrian despotism was not likely to tolerate the close vicinage of liberty in Piedmont and Naples; and a congress of tyrants and their minions was actually sitting.

The queen continued to riot in protracted triumph over her husband and her enemies. She was assailed indeed, during and after her trial, with slanderous fabrications, and even obscene ribaldry, by the idolaters of royalty; for these servile worshippers have a grovelling superstition, which, like that of savages, makes them as ready, at one moment to spit upon their idol, as to prostrate themselves before it at another. But the queen had a masculine courage to sustain her; and, for days and even weeks from the moment when the evidence against her had closed, persons of rank and character, who had previously stood aloof, made her visits of adhesion; whilst the road to her residence at Brandenburgh House was thronged with processions, bearing to her addresses of support and congratulation. The tables of the houses of lords and commons at the same time groaned under petitions in her favour. It was on this occasion that the duke of Wellington, in the excess of his military pride or civil ignorance, said *a county meeting was a farce.*

The queen, however, from the moment of her victory to that of her death, obtained an undue share of the attention of parliament and of the country. Her pretensions were supported by strong minorities in the house of commons: a motion by lord Archibald Hamilton, for the insertion of her

name in the liturgy, was negatived by a majority of 310 to 209. The speech from the throne recommended a provision for her: she declined, by a message to the house through Mr. Brougham, any vote of money for her use until she should be prayed for by name in the church service, and reinstated in her other rights. Lord Castlereagh said that she would never be satisfied until the power and dignity of the crown were prostrate at her feet. Notwithstanding her message of refusal, a sum not exceeding 50,000*l.* a year was voted for her life, and accepted by her. Lord Tavistock, on the 5th of February, moved a resolution of censure on the general system of measures pursued against her by ministers: after two nights spent in violent and barren debate, the motion was negatived, by 324 to 178 votes. The last great effort in her favour was made upon a motion by Mr. J. Smith, on the 13th of February, for the restoration of her name to the liturgy: it was negatived by a majority of 298 to 178.

The remainder of the session was, for the most part, languid and uninteresting. The catholic claims were submitted, on the 28th of February, by Mr. Plunket, who naturally inherited the station left vacant by the death of Mr. Grattan. Mr. Peel, on this occasion, appeared as the chief opponent of emancipation for the first time. The motion for a committee was carried, on a division of 227 to 221. In the committee, six resolutions proposed by Mr. Plunket were agreed to; and upon these he founded two bills, the one repealing disabilities, the other enacting securities. The accompanying securities were repudiated by a portion of the catholics, as

interfering with their religious conscience; and they were really vexatious, petty, and offensive. Mr. Canning supported the measure with an eloquence and fervour rarely equalled. The two bills, ultimately consolidated, were passed by the house of commons, sent up to the house of lords, and there rejected by a majority of 159 to 120.

Whilst the lords were engaged in discussing the second reading of the emancipation bill, on the 16th of April, the commons were debating a well digested and complete plan of parliamentary reform, introduced with an able speech by Mr. Lambton. The debate was adjourned, and had not long begun on the second evening, when the opponents of reform, taking advantage of a thin house, and the absence of its supporters, pressed a division, which ended prematurely in a majority of 55 to 43. Mr. Lambton, on entering the house to hear the debate, was not a little surprised to find the question already disposed of. This result was the subject of much pleasantry, and some humorous squibs from the wits of the tory party.

The house of commons was occupied once more, but for a moment only, and for the last time, on the 11th of July, with the rights of the queen. Mr. Hume moved an address to the king, the object of which was to secure the queen's participation in the honours of the approaching coronation. The usher of the black rod knocked at the door whilst he was reading his resolution, and the session was immediately prorogued.

The coronation was fixed for the 19th of July. A correspondence took place between the queen and lord Liverpool, in which she demanded, and the mi-

nister refused her, participation in the ceremony. She next memorialed to be heard by counsel in support of her claim. A committee of the privy council, after hearing Mr. Brougham and Mr. Denman on her side, and the attorney and solicitor general on the other, decided against her. She then demanded, without effect, from lord Sidmouth the home secretary, and lord Howard of Effingham the deputy earl marshal, a suitable place to view the coronation. Her last appeal was to the archbishop of Canterbury, by whom she desired to be crowned in Westminster Abbey, a day or two after the king. The archbishop replied, that he could act only in obedience to the sovereign. The morning of the 19th shone brightly upon the splendid absurdities of this mimic show of feudal vassalage and Gothic barbarism. Unmoved by the entreaties of her better-judging friends, the unhappy, infatuated queen proceeded to the abbey door, — was refused admittance by the door-keepers and military officers on guard, — attempted to obtain admittance by other entrances, — was equally unsuccessful, — and retired through the multitude, amidst mingled expressions of disapprobation and applause.

The exclusion from the abbey she might have borne, but to be hooted by the mob wounded her deeply. There was a wildness in her looks as she passed through the crowd; and she manifested through the day a feverish excitement of spirits. Her proud heart and masculine energy sustained her for a short time, and she appeared in public as usual; but her health was manifestly declining. On the 30th of July, whilst at Drury Lane Theatre,

she was taken seriously ill; and, on the 7th of August, closed her troubled life, at Brandenburgh House; having directed in her will that the words, "Here lies Caroline of Brunswick, the injured queen of England," should be her epitaph.

On the morning of the 14th, after a disgusting contest between her executors and the government for the possession of her remains, they were removed from Brandenburgh House towards Harwich, on their way to interment at Brunswick. The ministers, from false prudence, or to gratify personal feelings of unworthy rancour beyond the grave, gave orders that the funeral should take a circuit, to avoid manifestations of sympathy from the corporation and the people, along the direct route through London. At Kensington the procession found every road but that of London barricaded by the mob, and was constrained to take the forbidden route, with the intention of passing through Hyde Park into the northern road. The park gate was closed and barricaded, but was forced by the military. The upper gate was also barricaded. Here a conflict took place between the military and the people; and two of the mob were shot dead by soldiers. The procession moved on; the conflict was renewed; the mob triumphed, and the corpse was borne through the city. Sir Robert Wilson had remonstrated with some soldiers and an officer on duty. His interference, humane, but unmilitary, caused his removal from the army. The directing civil magistrate present, having consulted his humanity in preference to his orders, and to prevent bloodshed, yielded to the

wish of the multitude, was also deprived of his commission.

Whilst the queen of George IV. was dying, he was on his way to visit Ireland. The news of her death reached him on board the Irish packet. It either was, or was said to be, his intention, upon receiving the news, to land privately; but his person was recognised, his presence was proclaimed, and the whole population of Dublin and its vicinity pressed round him with delirious joy. His recollection of the more phlegmatic, independent, and self-licensed temper of an English mob, contrasted with the popular ecstasies of his present reception by the Irish, dissolved the frozen and freezing barriers of royal etiquette, and of his personal character. The homage which he received was not the less gratifying to him because it was unthinking and abject; and he threw himself, with more of natural effusion than he had perhaps ever manifested before, upon the hearts of the people. The Irish appeared to be seized, like the Abderites, with a sort of deliration; their heads turned, and imaginations possessed with a single idea — the presence of the king. He seemed to descend in kindness, like an apparition of superior nature, among a provincial people, debased by servitude of caste and country, of lively imaginations, and quick and extreme in their emotions, whether for good or ill.

The exhibitions of royal state, and the manifestations of enthusiastic homage, during his stay in Ireland, would be little worth repeating. His chief, if not only, private visit was to Slane Castle, the residence of lord Conyngham. Here he was

seen in his private and social character; and it is certain that he left upon the minds of persons very competent to judge, who then conversed with him for the first time, flattering impressions both of his capacity and demeanour. Among those invited to meet him were two individuals holding office in Ireland, who had agreed in being strenuous opponents of the union, but now entertained adverse opinions on the Catholic claims. One of these, a person equally and eminently distinguished by his eloquence, wit, and personal character, sat at dinner opposite the king. Lady Conygnham whispered something in the royal ear. There was nothing extraordinary in this: but their eyes were directed to the opposite guest, who appeared somewhat disturbed by the seeming scrutiny. The king relieved him by saying: "B——, you would hardly guess that lady Conyngham has been repeating to me a passage from one of your speeches against the union. My early opinion was, that your's and the ——'s" (referring to the other functionary present) "opposition to the measure was well-founded; and since I have seen this glorious people, and the effects produced by it, that opinion is confirmed; but," he added, as if correcting himself, "I am sure you will agree with me in opinion that, now the measure is passed, you should both feel it your duty to oppose any attempt to repeal it with as much zeal as you originally opposed its taking place." Both bowed assent; and the king continued, — "But you all committed a great mistake: you should have made terms, as the Scotch did; and you could have got any terms." He then referred, with perfect familiarity, to the

stipulations of the Scotch union. Mr. S——, the anti-Catholic functionary, said — "And the Scotch further stipulated for the establishment of their national religion." "You are right," said the king; "they secured that point also: but—no, no," (again hastily checking himself), "you must give no weight to what I have just said. It should *not* be supposed that I entertain an opinion from which inferences might be drawn that would lead to disappointment." Mr. S—— obviously meant that the Irish parliament, at the union, should have stipulated for Protestant ascendancy; but the king appeared to understand the Catholic by the national religion of Ireland, the emancipation of which should have been made a condition.

If kings did not, like other people, speak loosely, and accommodate the hue of their opinions to circumstances, it might be inferred from this speech of the late king, that he resisted the Catholic claims from some extrinsic influences rather than from personal feelings.

Despatches were received in the course of the evening, announcing the riots at the funeral procession of the queen; and he expressed, without the slightest reserve, in somewhat contemptuous terms, his dissatisfaction at the want of arrangement and energy on the part of ministers. He then adverted to the firmness with which his father had acted in the riots of 1780; and spoke of him in a tone of solemn reverence, with the reality or well-acted appearances, of strong emotion.

George IV. obtained for the moment, during this visit in Ireland, a magical ascendant over the

minds of individuals, and over politico-religious party spirit in the multitude. Had he adopted the liberal and decisive policy which either a sound understanding or a sound heart would have alike dictated to him, whilst the mass of the nation was in this state of fervour and fusion, he would have left behind him his image stamped permanently upon Ireland as a pacificator. But he merely issued at his departure, through a letter addressed to the lord lieutenant by lord Sidmouth (the most inauspicious vehicle he could employ), a puny equivocating exhortation to concord, which proved but a false gospel of religious peace. He left Ireland on the 5th, arrived in London on the 16th; and left England again on the 24th of September, for Hanover, where he made his public entry on the 11th of October.

Lord Talbot was at this time chief governor of Ireland, and Mr. Charles Grant chief secretary. The lord lieutenant had no one qualification for his office but that of being a narrow-minded exclusionist, and therefore agreeable to the Protestant ascendancy party. The secretary was a man of enlightened principles, of high character, of known capacity, and of that moral simplicity of purpose which distinguishes the administrator from the politician. His appointment was a pledge and gratification to the Catholics. But a government administered upon this wretched system of counteraction, conceived in the lowest spirit of political handicraft, was peculiarly inapplicable to Ireland, and produced there its natural effects. The king had not long departed, when his visit and his

advice were forgotten; discord and faction re-appeared in Dublin, and lawless violence in several counties of Munster and Connaught.

The year was signalised by an event which, a few years before, would have agitated cabinets and shaken systems, but which now passed over Europe very lightly, with the exception of France. This was the death of Napoleon at St. Helena. His imprisonment was aggravated by the vexations of his gaoler, and his character somewhat lowered by his complaints. The spoiled child of fortune and glory died in his captivity, of cancer in the stomach, on the 5th of May, 1821. Lord Wellesley said of him, that "he was of an order of spirits which make unto themselves great reverses." This admirable monumental trait of portraiture and eloquence deserves to be graven upon his statue or his tomb.

The year 1822 opened with difficult and dismal prospects to the king's government, already cowed by its disgraces. The commerce and manufactures of the country, it is true, gradually, though slowly, improved; but ministers, with a firmness which deserved praise, sustained and accelerated the return to cash payments; the value of money rose; the prices of agricultural produce fell still lower; distress ascended from the farmers to the landlords, reaching them not only in their luxuries, but their necessities; and the country gentlemen took such a part in county meetings as indicated a mutiny against the treasury bench in the house of commons. To meet this danger, lord Liverpool opened the doors of office at last to the long-expectant wishes of the Grenville-Wynne party. Lord

Grenville retired from public life; and the marquis of Buckingham, as chief of the party, was created a duke. A more important accession of strength, or at least of talent, was gained in the retirement of lord Sidmouth from the home department to make way for Mr. Peel. The part taken by Mr. Canning in the proceedings against the queen still rankled too bitterly in the king's mind to admit of his return to the cabinet. An important and auspicious change took place in the government of Ireland. Lord Wellesley was sent over as lord lieutenant in the room of lord Talbot. He was, it is true, according to the usual system of government by counterpoise, encumbered with Mr. Goulburn for his secretary. But the secretary was a person still more subordinate to the lord lieutenant in the station of his mind than in that of his office; and the scale was turned completely by the succession of Mr. Plunkett, a liberal politician, of high character and consummate ability, as attorney-general, to Mr. Saurin, the ablest and most intolerant champion of Protestant ascendancy. The character of the new Irish government was in no way so clearly or honourably proved, as by the factious virulence and vulgar mortifications in which the corporation of Dublin, and other meaner partisans of ascendancy, soon indulged against the lord lieutenant.

But the enlarged and beneficent views of lord Wellesley could not be executed or appreciated on the instant. He had to repress lawless outrages and atrocious crimes by a rigorous execution of severe penal enactments, and to employ military force against riotous rather than insurgent bands,

which took the field against all constituted authority, with desperate infatuation, in open day.

The king in person opened the session of parliament, on the 5th of February. His speech turned chiefly upon the distresses of the landed interest, which he regretted; and the "spirit of outrage which had led to daring and systematic violations of the law" in Ireland, the repression of which he recommended to the consideration of parliament. In the house of lords, an address echoing the speech was adopted without opposition. Sir Francis Burdett and Mr. Hume, in the house of commons, successively proposed amendments of no permanent interest, which were rejected by sweeping majorities. The first subject of legislation was the state of Ireland. The marquis of Londonderry, who had succeeded to this title upon the death of his father in the preceding year, introduced two bills for re-establishing the two prescriptive and almost ordinary engines of government in Ireland,—the insurrection act, and the suspension of the habeas corpus act. These bills were passed without difficulty. They were acquiesced in, to a certain extent, in and out of parliament, on the authority of lord Wellesley, and the security of their being exercised by a man of his capacity and views.

Crime and outrage in Ireland soon disappeared or diminished, but to be followed by a famine in its most dreadful form, with the usual concomitant of disease. The famine was produced by the failure of the harvest, especially in the potato crop, which constitutes the wretched and precarious staple of human sustenance to the peasantry of Ireland. The

scenes of death and misery among many thousands in the southern and western counties which came before the public, are among the most afflicting remembrances in the history of the country. The conduct of the government was prompt and humane. A sum of 500,000*l.* was placed at the disposal of lord Wellesley, to be dispensed in charitable relief, or in public works which should employ the labour of the poor. The British nation at the same time, with a spontaneous and munificent humanity, subscribed large sums for the relief of the perishing population of Munster and Connaught. The funds thus procured mitigated the horrors of this visitation, until the change of season, and a favourable harvest, put an end to it.

Mr. Canning was appointed to succeed lord Hastings, as governor-general of India, in the beginning of this year. Wishing, perhaps, to give *éclat* to his departure from the theatre of his glory, he, on the 30th of April, moved for leave to bring in a bill which should restore their right of sitting and voting in the house of lords to Catholic peers. That classic orator put forward, on the occasion, all the powers of his accomplished genius. It was difficult on this question, and for him who had treated it so often before, to produce any thing new. Pressing into his service, with admirable felicity, the ceremony of the coronation in the preceding summer, he asked, — "Did it occur to the representatives of Europe, when contemplating this animating spectacle, — did it occur to the ambassadors of Catholic Austria, of Catholic France, or of states more bigoted in

matters of religion,—that the moment this ceremony was over the duke of Norfolk would become disseised of the exercise of his privileges among his fellow peers? —that his robes of ceremony were to be laid aside and hung up, until the distant (be it a very distant!) day when the coronation of a successor to his present most gracious sovereign might again call him forth to assist at a similar solemnisation? — that, after being thus exhibited to the eyes of the peers and people of England, and to the representatives of the princes and nations of the world, the duke of Norfolk — highest in rank among the peers — the lord Cifford, and others like him, representing a long line of illustrious ancestry, as if called forth and furnished for the occasion, like the lustres and banners that flamed and glittered in the scene, were to be, like them, thrown by as useless and trumpery formalities? — that they might bend the knee and kiss the hand, that they might bear the train or rear the canopy, might discharge the offices assigned by Roman pride to their barbarian ancestors, —

"*Purpureâ tollant aulæa Britanni;*"

but that, with the pageantry of the hour, their importance faded away; that as their distinction vanished their humiliation returned; and that he who headed the procession of peers to-day, could not sit among them as their equal on the morrow?" The bill passed the commons by a small majority, and was thrown out by the lords.

The distress of the landed interest came frequently before parliament upon the presentation of

petitions. Mr. Brougham, early in the session, moved that the landed interest should be relieved by a reduction of taxes. The motion was opposed by ministers as a censure upon them, and negatived. Lord Londonderry, on the 18th of February, procured the appointment of the agricultural committee. This committee having made its report, Lord Londonderry, in pursuance of it, proposed, on the 29th of April, a plan of relief which was reducible to two leading points — the repeal of the annual malt tax; and a loan of a million by exchequer bills to the landed interest, upon the security of warehoused corn. The loan system of lord Londonderry, repudiated by the leading country gentlemen, supported by Mr. Ricardo and Mr. Huskisson, and laid bare with flaying sarcasm by Mr. Brougham, was ultimately agreed to.

The chancellor of the exchequer, at the same time, started two financial operations, of which the one succeeded but the other failed. The first was the reduction of the navy 5 per cents. to 4 per cent.; which was effected with a saving of nearly a million and a half, and of ninety thousand a year: the second, an alleviation of the burden of the military and naval pensions and civil superannuation allowances, by extending them, in the form of annuity loans, through a complex process over forty-five years. The plan was proved in parliament to be partly fallacious, and partly unintelligible; but was not the less passed into a law on the implicit faith of the minister. But Mr. Vansittart, though he persuaded majorities in parliament, did not convince capitalists out of it; and he found it necessary to

remodel his plan. A direct reduction of taxes exceeding three millions was effected at the same time.

A question of theological rather than political character, and relating to the conduct of an individual bishop, was brought before parliament in this and the preceding session. Dr. Herbert Marsh, bishop of Peterborough, a distinguished scholar and theologian, propounded to clergymen and candidates for ordination in his diocese eighty-seven questions, drawn up by himself; and to these he required satisfactory answers. Some clergymen and candidates petitioned the house of lords; and lords Holland and Dacre, who presented their petitions, described the bishop's conduct as vexatious and unwarranted. The bishop defended his conduct and his right. His conduct, passing over the theological question of right, may be pronounced not only just and fair, but called for. There was a class of divines, calling themselves "evangelical clergy of the church of England," who would enjoy the benefices of the establishment, with the credit and profits of a certain evangelical sectarian purity of doctrine. The bishop of Peterborough endeavoured, by sifting the consciences or the casuistry of these sanctified pluralists, to oblige them to make their election between the church and the conventicle. He was attacked by the whig opposition, in and out of parliament; but his conduct appears to have been, in this instance, essentially reasonable and just.

Parliament was prorogued, with a speech of no marked importance, on the 6th of August, by the king in person; and on the 10th he embarked at

Greenwich for Scotland. The king was still at sea, when his government was rather relieved than disorganised by the loss of one of its chief members; — lord Londonderry, on the 12th of August, terminated his life by suicide.

Amid the distractions of domestic affairs, popular riot, public distress, and the trial of the queen, the foreign relations of the country had scarcely engaged the serious attention of parliament or the people for some time. Whilst the holy alliance was strangling the new-born liberty of Italy, and coiling round that of Spain, the British government confined itself to passive protests, or vain declarations of abstract principles; and England had become dispossessed of her European station. This degeneracy in the foreign policy of England resulted from the political career and character of lord Londonderry, and led directly to his death. No government, not even that of ancient Rome, ever held a more commanding position than England upon the fall of the French empire. Aggrieved individuals and oppressed nations appealed to her as the arbitress, like Rome, of public right and political dominion over the civilised world. She had proffered to her the high and heroic part in the drama of European politics; and lord Londonderry condemned her to play a subordinate and mean one. His ignorance of the social intellect of Europe, past and present, in arts, literature, and policy; his silly adoption of the aristocratic tone and despotic principles of ministers and monarchs with whom he associated abroad; his impertinent false shame of the plebeian liberty of England; his openness to

the hollow flatteries of courtiers and their sovereigns; his total want of continental experience in public affairs, enabled men possessing an accurate topical knowledge of Europe, physical and moral, and trained in negotiation, artifice, and intrigue, to practise upon his incapacity and weakness, and lead him beyond his depth. In 1815–16, he actually co-operated with the relentless despotism which trampled on the rights of ancient and free states and independent nations. In the interval, however, between the congresses of Vienna and Verona, he became sensible of the false position into which he had brought his government, his country, and himself. When the holy allies grouped in congress at Troppau, and, by adjournment, at Laybach, issued an infamous proscription of human rights, liberty, and reason, declaring that "every change in legislation and government should emanate from those alone (themselves) whom God has rendered responsible for power," lord Londonderry protested, but with equivocal epithets and neutralising qualifications; and the emperor of Austria, without a shadow of right, except that of tyranny and brute force, destroyed the constitutional governments, and restored the imbecile tyranny of Naples and Piedmont,—with the additional pressure of his own barbarian yoke upon the whole of ill-fated, illustrious Italy.

Lord Londonderry almost expressly abandoned Italy to the Austrians; but, in his confidential note of 1820, he deprecated any more congresses, and any interference with the internal affairs of Spain, calling in to his aid the authority and Spanish ex-

perience of the duke of Wellington. Still, however, his language, even in this note, was equivocal and feeble, between his contradictory admissions and diplomatic equivocations. The Spaniards, for instance, should not be interfered with; because the duke of Wellington, in the late war, found it "a trait of Spanish character to be obstinately blind to the most pressing considerations of public safety." But again he says, in the same document, with his usual insipidity and sinuosity of diction, "There can be no doubt of the general danger which menaces more or less the stability of all governments, from the principles which are afloat, and from the circumstance that so many states of Europe are now employed in the difficult task of casting anew their governments upon the representative principle." His protests, if they deserve the name, were treated with indifference, perhaps derision: a congress was ordered to be held at Verona; the English government received an invitation; and his colleagues appointed lord Londonderry to appear on the Continent once more as the representative of England. He was now sensible of his false and difficult position. He had compromised himself too deeply in the policy and designs of the confederate despots. He knew not how to face them with his changed views, and probably his specific instructions from his colleagues. With his mediocre capacity, he had political ambition and personal spirit. The sense of his situation preyed upon his mind, disturbed his imagination, and led to his melancholy end.

No minister, with the exception, perhaps, of the

old duke of Newcastle, ever administered a high department of government with such a penury of intellect as lord Londonderry. He was the ministerial leader in the house of commons; but a wretched public speaker. He abounded in words; but so scanty and confused were his ideas that he lost his way in the mazes of parenthesis, and never could arrive at a complete sense or the turning of a period. In his attempts at the figurative, he brought together images the most trite and meagre, with a whimsical absence of all affinity or propriety.

The death of a public man in England, especially a death so sudden and lamentable, greatly assuages the political resentments against him in his life; and there was a reaction in favour of lord Londonderry when he ceased to live. His servile complaisance to despots abroad, his predilection for the worst engines of government at home, were for a moment forgotten. His social kindness, his fidelity to friends, his engaging manners, were alone remembered. But the honest hatred of the populace, deep-rooted, sincere, and savage, remained untouched, and spoke in a fearful yell of triumphant execration over his remains whilst his coffin was descending into the grave in Westminster Abbey.

The office of secretary of state for foreign affairs remained vacant for some time. The public voice, with one accord, designated Mr. Canning. He, however, continued his preparations for his departure for India; and declared to his friends at Liverpool that, as to his taking office at home, he had nothing

to communicate or conceal. Three causes were publicly and truly assigned for this delay; — the absence of the king in Scotland; his resentment of the part taken by Mr. Canning in favour of the queen; and the aversion of the old and incorrigible tories, with lord Eldon at their head, afraid of knowledge, jealous of talent, filled with a superstitious horror of any innovation in favour of commercial and religious emancipation, and therefore alarmed at the appointment and probable ascendant of Mr. Canning. But lord Liverpool earnestly desired the succession of Mr. Canning to lord Londonderry. His authority, as head of the administration, overcame the reluctance of his colleagues: the king sacrificed his resentments to his indolence and the prime minister's advice; and Mr. Canning received the seals of the foreign office, on the 16th of September. It was a momentous crisis for the new minister, and for the nation. Lord Londonderry had bequeathed to his successor the foreign relations of the country involved in difficulty and danger, and without any proportionate contingent opportunities of glory or success. The duke of Wellington left England for the Continent, to take the vacant place of lord Londonderry as British minister at Verona, when the foreign secretary was yet but two days in office.

Mr. Canning strengthened himself in the beginning of January, 1823, by the accession of two of his friends. Mr. Vansittart retired with a seat in the cabinet, a peerage by the title of lord Bexley, and the sinecure chancellorship of the duchy of

Lancaster. He was succeeded by Mr. Frederick Robinson, as chancellor of the exchequer. Mr. Huskisson was appointed president of the board of trade, without a seat in the cabinet. Both stood deservedly high in public opinion, as men of talent, of business, and of enlightened views.

The secretary needed this reinforcement. He had to contend in the cabinet with the profound hatred and plausible hypocrisy of some, and the unmanageable stupidity of others: in the two houses of parliament, with a new bitterness of opposition from the whigs. They charged him with insincerity in his support of Catholic emancipation, because he came into office without making it a cabinet question. This condition assuredly would not have been conceded; and Mr. Canning's insisting on it, instead of bringing in the whigs, himself, and a liberal administration, would only have perpetuated the sway of intolerance and toryism, to the prejudice of the Catholic claims, and of the liberties of Europe.

The aspect of the country, however, was, on the whole, favourable at the opening of the year 1823. Commerce and manufactures continued to improve, and the distress of the farmers was somewhat mitigated, though the landlords were still clamorous for relief. Several county meetings voted petitions on this subject to parliament. The most remarkable of these meetings was that of Norwich, on the 3d of January. A petition in accordance with the views of the whig opposition was proposed to the meeting, and favourably received. Mr. Cobbett presented, by way of amendment, an address drawn up by him-

self, briefly, elaborately, and of course ably. His petition contained several propositions, of which the most important were, an appropriation of church property to the payment of the public charges; and an equitable adjustment with regard to the public debt, and all debts and contracts between man and man. Mr. Cobbett struck, with a bold and skilful hand, a string which had already been touched, but hesitatingly and feebly; and his amendment was carried by acclamation.

The session was opened by commission on the 4th of February, with a speech which was received with general approbation. Lord Stanhope proposed an amendment, recommending a return to paper currency, for the relief of the landed interest. His speech had some of the eccentricity, but none of the wisdom, of his father; and after his amendment had been rejected, on a division of 62 to 3, the ministerial address was carried unanimously. The same unanimity prevailed in the house of commons. The speech set forth that his majesty declined being a party to any proceedings at Verona, with a view to interference in the internal concerns of Spain by foreign powers; and would use his utmost endeavours and good offices to avert the calamities of war between Spain and France. Upon this text Mr. Brougham spoke — in support of Spain, and in reprobation of the holy alliance, — a philippic not unworthy of the forum or the *agora*. The versatility and vigour with which he combined, in his speech, reason, history, rhetoric, and invective, acting upon the favourable prepossessions of the house, produced

an electric effect, which was felt in Spain, and produced there a fatal confidence.

Mr. Canning having vacated his seat, was not yet returned. Considering the duties imposed by the representation of Liverpool incompatible with the occupation of his time as a minister, he took his seat for Harwich, on the 12th of February. The distress of the landed interest was discussed incidentally on the 14th; and upon a motion by Mr. Whitmore for reducing the import price of grain 2*s.* a year until it fell to 60*s.*, on the 25th of February. The motion was negatived; but there was an obvious disposition on the part of the government to open the trade in corn. The foreign trade committee was at the same time re-appointed, and further steps taken to liberate foreign commerce. On the 21st of February, the new chancellor of the exchequer made a favourable statement of the finances. The income exceeded the expenditure by 7,000,000*l.*; of which 5,000,000*l.* should be applied to the payment of the debt, and the remaining 2,000,000*l.* to a further remission of taxation.

A considerable portion of the session was wasted, rather than employed, upon the daring insolence and corrupt practices of the ascendant faction in Dublin. The government of lord Wellesley was too impartial and enlightened to escape the revilings of the Orange party. Lord Wellesley prohibited the dressing of the statue of king William in College Green,—a mischievous folly, which had frequently produced riot and bloodshed. The Orange faction of Dublin took fire at this interference with a dis-

play of insulting ascendancy by the lowest rabble, not the respectable portion of the party. On the 14th of December the lord lieutenant visited the theatre: the house echoed with discordant clamour; but expressions of public regard for lord Wellesley greatly predominated. Some ruffians in the gallery threw a bottle, and the fragment of a watchman's rattle, at the lord lieutenant in his box. Three persons were taken into custody charged as the offenders. Mr. Plunkett oscillated between the capital and the minor offence: this was a fault, and his only one. It excited some surprise in a man of his superior capacity, and of a stern tranquillity of demeanour and character. But under this severe exterior he carried an excitable temperament. There is no man whose sensibility is more easily awakened, whose passions are more easily kindled to the prejudice of his judgment, where he consults, or thinks he is consulting, truth, justice, or humanity. Bills of indictment for the misdemeanor were sent up, and ignored by the grand jury as to one,—found against the two others. Two persons cannot commit a riot; and the finding was nugatory. Mr. Plunkett filed an *ex officio* information, in order to bring to justice persons whom, upon evidence laid before him, he believed guilty. The petty jury could not agree upon their verdict, and the prisoners were discharged.

The weapons used might knock out the brains, but could not perforate the body, of the lord lieutenant: and the offence was treated by one party as a mere ebullition of protestant zeal. Others ascribed the nugatory finding of the grand, and the non-agreement

of the petty jury, to party spirit and contrivance. The matter was made the subject of tedious discussions and a futile investigation in the house of commons; and the only result worth notice was, an exhibition of the corrupt and factious effrontery with which juries are packed, and justice abused, in Ireland. The only legislative act of importance respecting Ireland exclusively, during the session, was the tithe-composition act, which has been partially beneficial.

The catholic claims were submitted to parliament under hopeless circumstances, by Mr. Plunkett, on the 17th of April. A remarkable personal collision between Mr. Canning and Mr. Brougham served as an enlivening prelude to one of the dullest of debates. Sir Francis Burdett charged Mr. Canning with having deserted the catholics; pronounced the motion about to be made a mere farce; and called upon all the real friends of catholic emancipation to withdraw. Mr. Canning vindicated himself on the ground that an emancipating cabinet could not, in the actual state of the country, be formed. He was followed and attacked by Mr. Brougham in a strain of vehement asperity: Mr. Brougham charged him with "a specimen of truckling [to lord Eldon on the catholic question] the most monstrous and incredible in the whole history of political tergiversation." Mr. Canning, who appeared labouring to control his emotion for some minutes, and sat with his eye fixed on Mr. Brougham, rose at this moment from his seat, pronounced, in a tone of forced calmness, "Sir, I rise to say that is false," and resumed his seat. After a dead silence of some seconds, the

speaker called on Mr. Canning to explain: Mr. Canning would not comply. Several members interfered: Mr. Brougham would not explain until Mr. Canning had retracted. Mr. Bankes moved that both members should be placed in the custody of the serjeant at arms. At last sir Robert Wilson extricated the house by a suggestion of hypothetical and mutual explanation, which was adopted, and the affair ended.

On the 21st of May, sir James Mackintosh moved nine resolutions proposing specified mitigations of the criminal law. They were resisted by Mr. Peel, and negatived. Mr. Peel, however, brought in and carried four bills on the same subject, which fell short of the reforms contemplated by sir J. Mackintosh; but were still important steps in the progress of reason and humanity.

The proceedings of the holy alliance, in reference to Spain, were but rarely and transiently alluded to in parliament. On the 14th of April, lord Liverpool and Mr. Canning communicated to parliament in their respective places, the diplomatic correspondence on this subject. These papers, and the various motions on them are too complicated, voluminous, and connected in detail, to be more than glanced at. A brief reference to the leading facts will suffice. The duke of Wellington, it has been observed, set out for Verona when Mr. Canning was but forty-eight hours minister. The choice of the duke was, *in limine*, unfortunate: his coarse apprehensions, if not dislike, of civil liberty; his known sympathy with the principles and projects of the holy alliance; the utter want of heart with which

he entered into the foreign policy of Mr. Canning, which mainly consisted in disengaging the country from what may be called the Wellington and Castlereagh system, made him one of the most unfit persons that could have been appointed.

The decried Greeks were at this time bravely maintaining their struggle to throw off the Turkish yoke; and apprehensions were entertained of war between the Porte and Russia. So secretly had the holy alliance carried on its designs against Spain, that the duke of Wellington supposed himself going to Verona to assist in arranging the destinies of Greece only. Arrived at Paris, he was informed by the French minister, Villele, that the affairs of Spain would also come under the consideration of the congress. He wrote to Mr. Canning for instructions, and was instructed as follows in reply:—

"If there be a determined project to interfere by force, or by menace, in the present struggle in Spain, so convinced are his majesty's government of the uselessness and danger of any such interference, so objectionable does it appear to them in principle, as well as utterly impracticable in execution, that when the necessity arises, or (I would rather say) when the opportunity offers, I am to instruct your grace at once frankly and peremptorily to declare, that to any such interference, come what may, his majesty will not be a party."

Never were the credit of a government and the word of a king prostituted with more falsehood than by the government and king of France. A French army was stationed on the Spanish frontier. Louis XVIII. declared to the French chambers, in

the face of Europe, that this military force was a "cordon sanataire" to keep out the yellow fever, which was raging in Spain; and that those who imputed to him any hostile designs against Spain were "evil-minded calumniators." In the beginning of 1823, after a lapse only of some weeks, the same faithless, shameless person informed the same chambers, in the face of Europe, that the pretended sanatory cordon was, in reality, an army of invasion, and then crossing the frontier under the duke of Angoulême. The French minister Villele played his part, personally, with the same effrontery and falsehood. He assured Mr. Canning that his intentions were pacific; and that he should strictly abstain from interfering between the insurgent bands of the faith, so called, and the constitutional government. But when reproached by the French ultras with having wasted time in idle negotiations with England, he announced publicly in the French chamber of deputies, that the French army was not yet in a condition to invade Spain; and that he employed the time of hollow professions to Mr. Canning in fomenting and aiding insurrection against the Spanish constitution.

Two courses were open to Mr. Canning in this emergency — neutrality or war. He chose the former; and stated his grounds at great length, and with much eloquence, in the house of commons. A similar exposition was made in the house of lords by lord Liverpool; and the course pursued by the foreign secretary was sanctioned by large majorities of both houses.

The public feeling was strongly in favour of suc-

couring the Spaniards; but the public judgment was in favour of peace. Every British feeling was revolted by the perfidy of France and the arrogance of Russia in the attack on the Spaniards: but war, at the moment, would have been a grievous interruption to public industry and to the current improvement of the public resources; and Spain was left to maintain unaided an unequal quarrel.

The session of parliament was prorogued by commission on the 19th of July. Mr. Canning, in the course of the autumn, greatly extended his popularity, and rallied round him the opinion of great and enlightened masses by visiting some of the large manufacturing and maritime trading towns. The following passage of a speech spoken by him at Plymouth excited a powerful sensation, not only at home, but abroad: — "Our ultimate object was," said Mr. Canning, "the peace of the world: but let it not be said that we cultivate peace either because we fear, or because we are unprepared for, war; on the contrary, if, eight months ago, the government did not hesitate to proclaim that the country was prepared for war, if war should unfortunately be necessary, every month of peace that has since passed has but made us so much the more capable of exertion. The resources created by peace are means of war. In cherishing those resources we but accumulate those means. Our present repose is no more a proof of inability to act, than the state of inertness and inactivity in which I have seen those mighty masses that float in the waters above your town is a proof they are devoid of strength, and incapable of being fitted for

action. You well know, gentlemen, how soon one of those stupendous masses, now reposing on their shadows in perfect stillness — how soon, upon any call of patriotism or of necessity, it would assume the likeness of an animated thing — instinct with life and motion; — how soon it would ruffle, as it were, its swelling plumage; — how quickly it would put forth all its beauty and its bravery, collect its scattered elements of strength, and awaken its dormant thunder. Such as is one of these magnificent machines when springing from inaction into a display of its might — such is England herself: while apparently passive and motionless, she silently concentrates the power to be put forth on an adequate occasion."

The year 1824 opened still more auspiciously than the preceding year. Manufacturing industry and commerce continued to advance, and agriculture was reviving. Complaint from the land-owners was either faint or unheard. The abundance of capital, the sanguine spirit which flattering prospects create in a people or an individual, gave a diseased activity to enterprise, and produced the memorable mania of joint-stock projects.

The holy alliance obtained its iniquitous triumph over Spain in the preceding year. The Spaniards unhappily proved untrue to themselves. Spain, however, was the victim of circumstances too various to be gone into; and though the calamity fell upon the whole nation, the disgrace belongs to two or three individual traitors. Constitutional Spain attacked by France with the whole force of her undistracted monarchy, whilst the despots of

Europe were drawn up against her in reserve, was placed once more under the perfidious tyranny of Ferdinand; and the French continued their occupation of Cadiz. The British government, however, neutralised in a great measure this occupation (it may be called) of Spain, by protecting the independence of Spanish America. "We will not," said Mr. Canning to the French government, "interfere with Spain in any attempt which she may make to re-conquer *what were once her colonies*; but we will not permit any third power to attack or re-conquer them for her." These potent words prevented the partition, and created the independence, of "that new world;" which, to use Mr. Canning's expression at a subsequent period, "he called into existence to redress the balance of the old." British consuls were, at the same time, appointed to the chief commercial places in the new American republics.

George IV. now began to indulge those habits of secluded pomp which distinguished the latter years of his life. Fastidious indolence, and the satiety of popular shouts, public shows, and servile adulation, in Ireland, Hanover, and Scotland, combined with his increasing corpulency and infirm health to fix him in those habits. Parliament was opened, as it had been closed, by commission, on the 3d of February. The speech of the commissioners was in a tone of high but justifiable gratulation on the prosperity of the united kingdom, and the state of public affairs at home and abroad. The addresses produced speeches in both houses; but no opposition in either. Lord Lansdowne deplored the fate of Spain; regretted that the British cabinet had not remon-

strated with more energy; and thought a greater advance should have been made towards recognising the independence of South America. Mr. Brougham, in the house of commons, went over the general tyranny and particular cruelties of the Austrians in Italy, and Ferdinand in Spain, with a sweeping hurricane of invective and declamation. It was on this occasion that he threw out one of those pointed and portable phrases, by which an unknown or neglected truth is circulated instantaneously, and graven on the minds and memories of men: — "England," he said, "was bound over in recognizances of 800,000,000*l.* to keep the peace." The foreign policy of the country regarding Spain was subsequently discussed upon formal motions submitted by lords Nugent and John Russell. It was vindicated by Mr. Canning; and sanctioned by large majorities of the house of commons.

From the financial statement of the chancellor of the exchequer, it appeared that the public revenue continued to improve. There was a surplus of 5,000,000*l.*, applicable to the reduction of the public debt. The chancellor was highly popular, not only from his prosperous administration and ability, but from his rare candour. Further steps were taken towards a more unshackled and liberal system in the trade of the country. The most important of these measures were, first, the repeal of what were called protecting duties between Ireland and Britain, at the request of the Irish themselves, who were taught by experience the futility or mischiefs of those pretended protections; next, the alterations in the laws respecting the silk trade, introduced, vindicated,

and carried by Mr. Huskisson. Partial and short-sighted interests were enlisted in bitter hostility against this able minister. The substitution of a duty of 80 *per cent.* for absolute prohibition on the importation of foreign silks, was violently opposed. But the wisdom of Mr. Huskisson's views, and the force of his clear and informed judgment, obtained an easy triumph. Commercial treaties were, at the same time, entered into with the Netherlands, Prussia, and Sweden.

The state of Ireland occupied a considerable portion of the attention of both houses. There was a return, all but complete, to a state of order and tranquillity in the counties where outrages had prevailed. Committees of enquiry into the general condition of Ireland were appointed by the lords and commons. The catholic association, which subsequently became so powerful an engine in emancipating the catholics, was first formed in Dublin at this period. Its existence was denounced in parliament; but no proceedings were taken against it by the government.

The renewal of the Alien Bill was resisted in this session with unusual energy. Sir James Mackintosh took the lead in opposition, and distinguished himself by his eloquence as an orator, and his knowledge on the subject as a publicist. The bill was carried; but its powers were exercised only in one case, having no relation to politics. England was crowded with proscribed patriots from Italy and Spain, who were treated, especially those of Spain, with hospitality and kindness.

The abuses of the church of Ireland and the court of chancery in England gave rise to much

discussion and declamation, but led to no legislative enactment.

The shocking severity of treatment which a missionary named Smith had received from a court-martial in Demerara, on a charge of being concerned in a revolt of slaves, was brought before parliament by Mr. Brougham. The punishment of the missionary was flagrantly unjust; but it must be confessed, that the ignorant fanaticism and spiritual presumption of these missionaries were calculated to alarm the fears and inflame the passions of the colonists. Mr. Canning deprecated an express censure, rather than vindicated the legality of the proceedings; and Mr. Brougham's motion of censure was negatived. The offence of engaging in the slave trade was, at the same time, declared piracy, subject to be punished as such.

This short and rather uninteresting session was closed by the king in person, on the 25th of June.

Violence and disorder pervaded almost the whole of the West India colonies during the year. The slaves manifested a spirit of insubordination, under the mistaken idea that the imperial parliament had given them freedom which was withheld by the colonial assemblies. Those assemblies, it is true, rejected every recommendation from the government at home for the benefit and improvement of the condition of the slaves; and were at open war, especially in the chief island, Jamaica, with the local government.

At the Cape of Good Hope, lord Charles Somerset had a petty quarrel, involving a series of vexations and complaints with the people under his

government; and at the wretched settlement of Sierra Leone the governor, sir C. Macarthy, was defeated, with the loss of his own life, and a shocking carnage of his small military force, by the savage tribe or nation of Ashantee.

A serious war broke out in India between the company and the king of Ava, or the Burman empire. The Burmese invaded the territory of the company, and hostilities were commenced on an extensive scale in the spring; but with great advantage, on the whole, to the British during the remainder of the year. A serious mutiny broke out in three native regiments at Barackpore; and was overcome only by surrounding them with an overwhelming force, and a heavy fire of musketry and artillery.

Louis XVIII., king of France, died on the 16th of August in this year, and was succeeded by his brother, the count d'Artois, with the title of Charles X. The succession produced no immediate effects on the political relations of Europe.

CHAP. XXIX.

1825—1827.

The sixth session of the existing parliament was opened by commission on the 3d of February, 1825. The speech of the commissioners reviewed, somewhat more circumstantially than usual, the aspect of public affairs, foreign and domestic. Their references to foreign incidents were, on the whole, satisfactory. Peace was no longer endangered in the east of Europe; the differences between Russia and the Ottoman Porte were arranged through the British ambassador; the commercial relations with the new states of America were confirmed by formal treaties; a continued improvement had taken place in agriculture; commerce was benefited by the abolition of restrictive laws: "there never," said the commissioners, "was a period in British history when the people were so thriving and contented;" even in Ireland, outrages had subsided, and "industry and commercial enterprise were extending themselves to that part of the United Kingdom." But it would seem as if fate decreed that the state of Ireland should never give unalloyed satisfaction. "It is therefore the more to be regretted," continued the commissioners, "that associations should

exist in Ireland which have adopted proceedings irreconcilable with the spirit of the constitution, and calculated, by exciting alarm, and by exasperating animosities, to endanger the peace of society, and to retard the course of national improvement. His majesty relies upon your wisdom to consider, without delay, the means of applying a remedy."

This allusion to Ireland, and the recommendation with which it closes, was the chief, if not the only topic, which was made the subject of discussion. "The speech," said Mr. Brougham, "talks of associations, in the plural, and not without an object. I warn the house not to be entrapped by the contrivance: that little letter 's' is one of the slyest introductions that ever Belial resorted to when he would

> ——— "Make the worse appear
> The better reason, to perplex and dash
> Maturest counsels; for his thoughts are low."

I am perfectly aware who added that 's;' I know the hand. — I discern one of those 'subtle equities' so familiar to the court over which a noble and learned lord presides. Let the proposed measures be carried, and the catholic association will be put down with one hand, whilst the Orange societies will receive only a gentle tap with the other."

The judgment of Mr. Brougham, however expert as a connoiseur, may still have erred in giving lord Eldon the credit of this stroke of art; but it is certain that the catholic association was alone aimed at. That body, from its skilful organisation and extensive machinery, had acquired a formidable power during

the period of a few months from its birth. Contributions in money were solicited from the whole catholic population of Ireland; and the fund thus obtained was employed effectively in obtaining legal redress for public or individual wrong; in promoting education; and vindicating the cause and religion of the catholics. This irregular power, like a new and paramount estate of the realm, excited the jealousy by invading the functions of the government: but there was one fact which the disingenuous only could and did contest,—that to its influence and exhortations was mainly due the pacification of Ireland. With the exception of this topic, the addresses were agreed to without dissent in both houses.

On the 10th of February, Mr. Goulburn, the Irish secretary, brought in a bill "to amend the acts relating to unlawful societies in Ireland;" in other words, to put down the catholic association. An address of the association to the people conjured them, "by the hate they bore the orangemen, who were their natural enemies, and by the confidence they reposed in the catholic association, who were their natural and zealous friends, to abstain from all secret and illegal associations, and whiteboy disturbances and outrages." This appeal was reprobated with pious horror by the enemies of the association and of the catholics. To turn an existing and natural hatred to the account of peace and humanity, shocked the Christian principles of those who would have witnessed or practised an appeal to religious rancour, for personal or party purposes, without the slightest scruple, in a feigned voice of

charity from under a mask. An eloquent and earnest debate was protracted by adjournment through four nights: parliament was on the eve of a dissolution, and many Irish members, who had soon to meet their catholic constituents, supported the association with a factitious, hollow violence. The friends of the catholics, in the ministry, found themselves in a difficult position, and were closely pressed. The chief interest of this debate now consists in Mr. Canning's vindication of himself. He recalled the incidents of his public life, in reference to the catholic cause, with a convincing frankness, and (it may be called) a touching effusion of personal feelings, which made the weapons of debate drop from the hands of Mr. Brougham. "Thus have I shown," said Mr. Canning, "that, in the year 1812, I refused office rather than enter into an administration pledged against the catholic question. I did this at a time when office would have been dearer to me than at any other period of my political life, — when I would have given ten years of life for two years of office; not for any sordid or selfish purpose of aggrandisement, but for far other and higher views. But, is this the only sacrifice I have made to the catholic cause? From the earliest dawn of my public life, — ay, from the first visions of youthful ambition, — that ambition had been directed to one object above all others. Before that object, all others vanished into comparative insignificance: it was desirable to me beyond all the blandishments of power, beyond all the rewards and favours of the crown. That object was, to represent in this house the university in which

I was educated. I had a fair chance of accomplishing this object, when the catholic question crossed my way. I was warned, fairly and kindly warned, that my adoption of that cause would blast my prospect: I adhered to the catholic cause, and forfeited all my long-cherished hopes and expectations. And yet I am told that I have made no sacrifice! that I have postponed the cause of the catholics to views and interests of my own! The representation of the university has fallen into worthier hands. I rejoice with my right honourable friend near me (Mr. Peel) in the high honour which he has obtained: long may he enjoy the distinction; and long may it prove a source of reciprocal pride to our parent university and to himself! Never till this hour have I stated, either in public or in private, the extent of this irretrievable sacrifice; but I have not felt it the less deeply. It is past, and I shall speak of it no more." The motion of Mr. Goulburn was carried by a majority of 278 to 123.

There was at this time a catholic deputation of lords and gentlemen, members of the association, in London, to watch and resist the measures for its suppression. A petition from this deputation, denying and offering to disprove the allegations against it, was presented by Mr. Brougham; who moved, without success, that the petitioners should be heard by counsel at the bar of the house. The bill was passed by both houses, and received the royal assent on the 9th of March. The catholic association became defunct under its operation but to be resuscitated.

The petition of the Irish Catholics was presented soon after by sir Francis Burdett, who brought forward the motion in a new and somewhat curious form. His plan was threefold: — the repeal of disabilities; the enactment of a state provision for the catholic clergy; and the raising of the Irish forty shilling to a ten pound franchise. The two latter measures, called in derision "the wings" of the emancipation bill, were intended, the former as a security for the state, the latter as a protection for the Irish protestants against the overwhelming numbers of the catholics at elections. This triple measure passed the house of commons by small majorities.

On the 25th of April, between the second and third readings in the house of commons, the duke of York, in presenting a petition from the canons of Windsor against the catholics to the house of lords, uttered his memorable speech, which closed with the declaration that he would to the last moment of his life — whatever his situation — resist the emancipation of the catholics, "So help him God!" All tyrants think themselves immortal: the catholics and their cause outlived the duke of York, and triumphed. His speech, however, coming from the presumptive heir to the crown, had a great share in deciding the majority of the lords against the measure; and acted with great effect upon the congenial mass of brute ignorance and bigotry which is to be found in every people, however enlightened and free.

Upon the rejection of the first proposition by the

lords, the auxiliary measures were of course abandoned.

The catholic question was embarrassed rather than aided by these "wings." They also exhibited some specimens of curious inconsistency and tergiversation. Sir Francis Burdett and some other reformers would raise the franchise; the Irish catholic clergy hailed with ill-disguised avidity at first a state subsistence instead of their precarious voluntary support, but, in obedience to the popular gale, soon repudiated it with pious disinterestedness; and Mr. O'Connell, a catholic barrister and prominent "agitator," having consented to force the unhallowed gift of a state annuity upon the catholic priesthood, and lent his aid to disfranchise the Irish forty shilling freeholders, no sooner saw the loss of the emancipation bill, and the barren odium attending his support of "the wings," than he made a public recantation of his errors, and asked public pardon of his God and his country.

The lords' committee on the general condition of Ireland was re-appointed at the opening, and made its report in the course of the session. The report was unimportant in itself, but invaluable for the mass of evidence appended to it. The existing generation was, and future generations will be, surprised and shocked by the perusal of this miscellany of human wrongs and wretchedness in Ireland.

The finances in the hands of Mr. Robinson continued to improve. The surplus exceeded by nearly a million his estimate stated in the preceding year; and taxes were reduced on various articles, direct and indirect, to the amount of a million and a half.

His speech on the occasion was eloquent and sanguine; and if his anticipations were not verified, the cause is to be found in those turns in the course of human affairs which no statesman, however sagacious or able, can be expected to foresee or control. The session was closed by commission, on the 6th of July.

The joint-stock mania of the preceding and present year; the general spirit of commercial enterprise; the quantity of capital forced into various branches of trade or speculation, from which it could be immediately called in; an unfavourable turn in the exchanges, — all co-operated to produce difficulties in the money market: a panic was created; the failure of three or four London banks produced a general crash of the country bankers; and the autumn of 1825 witnessed a crisis of distress and ruin. It was rumoured, and apprehended, that cash payments would be restricted by an order of the king in council: but the ministers came to the relief of trade and credit, only by a temporary issue of one and two pound bank notes, and by an extraordinary issue of sovereigns from the mint.

The military operations in India against the Burmese continued without any striking advantage or result; and, from the great distance of the theatre of action, were little thought of in England beyond the circle of the East India proprietary.

The emperor Alexander of Russia, having extinguished the last faint breath and erased the last vestige of freedom in Poland, and traversed the greater portion of the Russian empire, rested at Taganrog, on the shore of the sea of Azof, in November,

and died there on the 1st of December. It was generally understood that he retired to Taganrog for the benefit of his health. Some, however, have thought differently. That plausible impostor had long since thrown aside the character in which he had deluded individuals and nations. The more intelligent and enquiring Russians, who had served or travelled in civilised Europe, carried back with them more than merely vague notions of European liberalism; and Alexander was supposed to have, under the pretence of health, preferred Taganrog to St. Petersburg, where he dreaded the existence of secret societies—those *foci* of national spirit and conspiracy which despotism creates for its destruction. It was apprehended that his death would derange the politics of Europe, and therefore the foreign relations of England; but the event was not felt beyond the precincts of Russia. Constantine abandoned his right of inheritance — not from fidelity to his previous pledge, but from pure fear. The throne of Russia is always, and would have been especially to him, a post of danger. A conspiracy exploded, under pretence of forcing the diadem upon the brow of Constantine, but with very different objects; and was defeated by the grand duke Nicholas, who succeeded to the empire.

The distress of 1825 continued almost unabated at the commencement of 1826. The workman was without employment; the tradesman without credit; and both commercial and bank failures perpetuated distrust. With one exception, however, the extreme pressure of distress produced no serious disturbance. In the month of April, assemblages of

workmen in Lancashire, partially armed with various kinds of weapons, committed dreadful, but momentary, havoc upon power-looms. Parliament was opened by commission on the 2d of February. The speech chiefly turned upon the existing crisis of distress. "His majesty," said the commissioners, "relies upon your wisdom to devise such measures as may tend to protect both public and private interests against the like sudden and violent fluctuations, by placing on a firm foundation the currency and circulating credit of the country." This was the most important part of the speech. It dashed the hopes of those who still clung to paper money. Lord King, in the house of peers, moved an amendment, pledging ministers to a revision of the corn laws within the session. Lords Lansdowne and Grosvenor objected to this step, but only as being premature. It was negatived without a division; and the ministerial address agreed to. In the house of commons, the address was unopposed. Mr. Brougham, reserving to himself perfect freedom on the topics in the speech, vindicated the recently adopted principles of free trade from any share in producing the existing difficulties, and rather sustained than combated the government.

On the 10th, the house of commons resolved itself into a committee on the bank charter; and a proposition for putting an end to the circulation of small notes — that is, under the value of *5l.* — was submitted by the chancellor of the exchequer. The opponents of this proposition were agreed only in giving a vote in the negative. Their views of

the subject presented a curious, if not whimsical, variety, according to their theories or their interests. It was supported by Mr. Brougham, and opposed by Mr. Baring, who moved an adverse amendment. The ministerial proposition was adopted, by a majority of 232 to 89. This sweeping majority decided not only the particular question, but the general principle. The extinction of small notes was quickly followed by two other measures affecting the currency. The first provided that the number of partners in each country banking house might be unlimited. This security to the public was an invasion of the bank charter, which provided that the partners in each private banking concern should not exceed six. The assent of the bank was given, after some negotiation, upon obtaining, as an equivalent, the second measure, — which extended the exclusive privileges of the Bank of England, like those of the Bank of Ireland, within a circle of which the diameter should be 120 miles, with the capital for its centre.

Whilst these measures were in progress, the public distress appeared but little, if at all, assuaged. There was a general expectation and demand, both in parliament and throughout the country, that ministers would afford temporary aid by an issue of exchequer bills. The government, in spite of clamour, odium, and imputations of hard-heartedness, had the firmness and public spirit to withhold a short-sighted and injurious palliative; but guaranteed the Bank to the extent of two millions in the purchase of exchequer bills in the money market. The Bank came to the resolution

of lending three millions upon security, direct or collateral; and sent commissioners into the chief provincial towns for the purpose of arranging these advances. The loans applied for fell far short of the fund disposable. In some towns no applications were made. The knowledge that such loans were attainable restored commercial confidence; — so much is mercantile credit a thing not even of opinion, but of mere imagination.

Mr. Ellice, one of the members for Coventry, moved a select committee to consider the petitions of the silk manufacturers. Mr. Williams, the member for Nottingham, who seconded the motion, signalised himself very unworthily by an attack upon Mr. Huskisson. He sneered at "philosophy;" and, cloaking the grossness of his personality in the language of Burke, applied as that celebrated man, with all the impetuosity of his temper, never would have applied it. Mr. Williams said "a perfect metaphysician was a being which exceeded the devil in malignity and contempt for the welfare of mankind." An appeal to the vulgar approbation and base passions of the rabble, by the homage of levelling ribaldries directed against the legitimate superiorities of science and intellect, came with a bad grace from Mr. Williams, who has the reputation of being one of the most accomplished scholars in the kingdom. Mr. Huskisson replied in a speech of the soundest eloquence, which was heard with profound emotion, and cheered loudly at its close. The speech of Mr. Canning is interesting, not only for its talent, and the just and generous eulogy which he pronounced upon his friend, but from his evidently

giving vent in it to the private disgusts and vexations which he and Mr. Huskisson were condemned to endure from the enemies of philosophy and reason in the cabinet. "Is it not," said he, "the same doctrine and the spirit which now animate those who persecute my right honourable friend, the same which in former times stirred up persecution against the best benefactors of mankind? Is it not the same doctrine and spirit which imbittered the life of Turgot? Is it not a doctrine and a spirit such as this which consigned Galileo to the dungeons of the Inquisition? Is it not a doctrine and a spirit such as these which have at all times been at work to stay public advancement, and to roll back the tide of civilisation?—A doctrine and a spirit actuating the little minds of men, who, incapable of reaching the heights from which alone extended views of human nature can be taken, console and revenge themselves by calumniating and misrepresenting those who have toiled to those heights for the advantage of mankind. Sir, I have not to learn that there is a faction in the country—I mean not a political faction—I should, perhaps, rather have said a sect, small in numbers and powerless in might, who think that all advances towards improvement are retrogradations towards jacobinism. These persons seem to imagine, that, under no possible circumstances can an honest man endeavour to keep his country upon a line with the progress of political knowledge, and to adapt its course to the varying circumstances of the world. Such an attempt is branded as an indication of mis-

chievous intentions, as evidence of a design to sap the foundations of the greatness of the country."

The following passage is still more explicit: — "But it is singular to remark, how ready some people are to admire in a great man the exception, rather than the rule, of his conduct. Such perverse worship is like the idolatry of barbarous nations, who can see the noon-day splendour of the sun without emotion; but who, when he is in eclipse, come forward with hymns and cymbals to adore him. Thus, there are those who venerate Mr. Pitt less in the brightness of his meridian glory than under his partial obscurations; and who gaze on him with the fondest admiration when he has accidentally ceased to shine." The motion of Mr. Ellice was rejected by a majority of 222 to 40.

A motion made by Mr. Whitmore, for a general enquiry into the operation of the corn-laws, was rejected, notwithstanding the clamour of the manufacturing workmen, and the petitions on the tables of both houses. Mr. Canning, however, early in May, introduced two measures into the house of commons, — one for the admission of bonded corn, on paying a certain duty; the other for giving ministers the power of admitting foreign grain at their discretion during the recess. The first measure was intended for present relief, the second, to guard against the contingency of a famine price of corn at a time when parliament would not be sitting. Both were carried after strong opposition; but, in the second bill, the quantity of corn admissible, instead of being indefinite, was limited

to 500,000 quarters, and the period to two months from the opening of the ports.

The state of the finances was still favourable, notwithstanding the pressure of distress. The income exceeded the expenditure by half a million.

Mr. Peel in this session made a great advance in reducing to an orderly and accessible compass the chaotic mass of English criminal law, and purifying it of some barbarous enactments and absurd technicalities. Attempts were made, in this and two preceding sessions, to reform both the abuses and the judicature of the court of Chancery: but lord Eldon was chancellor; and delays of justice, and the profits of accumulated unperformed duties, were held sacred.

This short session, the sixth of the existing parliament, was prorogued by commission on the 31st of May, and the parliament dissolved on the 2d of June. The chief topics upon which candidates were sounded or tested were the corn laws, and the catholic claims. In England, the speech of the duke of York and the Irish political agitations had created an adverse feeling to the catholic claims; but the catholics ruled the elections in Ireland. The catholic association, in about six months after it had been put down, re-appeared under a new form, without constituent organisation, without committees, without officers, without collections of money, without adjourned meetings, and pursued its destination with more success than ever. The "rent" was received as usual, under the name of "free gifts." A sort of political revolution had begun in the social community of Ireland. The catholics began to mani-

fest a more daring sense of their manhood, their numbers, and their rights. A new power had started up on their side,—the growth of a short-sighted and petty policy. To prevent the Irish priests from being inoculated with anti-British feelings abroad, it was resolved that they should be educated and ordained at home. The result was a race of priests, in religion more catholic than if they had been sent to France, Italy, Portugal, or Spain; in politics, not alone national, but democratic, and exercising the influence of unbroken connection, kindred, and sympathy with the catholic people. The priests joined and identified themselves with the lay agitators of the association; and the consequence was unbounded dominion over the catholic mind. This power decided the elections through three out of the four provinces in favour of emancipation. It dispossessed the Beresford family of the county representation of Waterford. Never was popular retribution more just, or the victim better chosen.

The prospects of the harvest were, in the mean time, unfavourable. Towards the end of August the price of grain rose above the importation limit; but the averages could not be taken, and foreign corn legally admitted into the market, until the 15th of November. Ministers, acting on their responsibility in this crisis, admitted foreign corn contrary to law, by an order in council, on the 1st of September. The necessity of a bill of indemnity caused the premature assembling of parliament on the 14th of November. The ceremony of swearing the members of the house of commons began on that day; and on the 21st the session was opened by the

king in person. The chief subject of congratulation to which he referred was the termination of the war in India, and conclusion of a treaty of peace with the Burmese. The chief objections to the royal speech were of omission; and the addresses were carried by large majorities in both houses. An act of indemnity for the recent violation of the corn laws was passed without opposition.

Mr. Canning was, at this time, four years foreign minister. His policy during that time was incessantly directed to the means of disengaging the British government, without violence, from the wake of the holy alliance, in which his predecessor had bound it, and disorganising that confederacy against the rights of men and nations: but his foreign administration, however able, energetic, and active, was yet confined, for the most part, to an invisible under current of diplomatic missions and state papers, of which the effects, however important, were negative and unperceived. He now signalised his ministry by a stroke of statesmanship which practically and publicly righted England in her position as an European power, and gave promise of counsels which, in inspiring wisdom and vigorous execution, should resemble and equal those of the elder and greater Pitt.

It is necessary to revert for a moment to some events in Portugal.

John VI., king of Portugal, was imbecile and humane. He did not, like his neighbour Ferdinand, shed the blood and proscribe the lives of constitutionalists by a perfidious and forsworn reaction. His second son, Miguel, who has since attained a celebrity so

odious, and his wife, the worthy mother of Miguel and sister of Ferdinand, both felt an impatient thirst of blood, vengeance, and ambition; formed a parricidal conspiracy against the king; assassinated his chamberlain; arrested his other servants; imprisoned his person; and would probably have taken his life, if the British minister had not interfered and concerted his escape on board a British ship of war in the Tagus. The unnatural son was ordered out of Portugal, under pretence of travelling; the king reinstated, and quiet for the time restored. This occurred in April, 1824. The unsettled relations between Portugal and Brazil continued until May, 1825; when the king of Portugal, under the advice and influence of England, acknowledged, by letters patent, the independence of Brazil. During all this time the French minister at Lisbon, supported by the queen and her faction, laboured with unceasing activity and intrigue to deprive England of her ancient ascendency, and even attempted to occupy Portugal with French troops from Spain; but was foiled by the vigour and vigilance of the British government, and the presence of a British naval force in the Tagus. John VI. died on the 10th of March, 1826; having appointed his daughter, the infanta Isabella Maria, regent, in the name of his eldest son don Pedro, resident emperor of Brazil. The constitution of Brazil obliged don Pedro to make his election between the two crowns: and, preferring that of Brazil, he abdicated the crown of Portugal in favour of his eldest daughter; having, however, first framed a constitution for the Portuguese nation, which he sent over

with his act of abdication, by the hands of the British minister sir Charles Stuart.

The constitution, received with unbounded joy by the Portuguese liberals, with open execration by the faction of the queen and don Miguel, and with strong antipathy by the French and other ministers of the holy alliance at Lisbon, was brought into operation on the 31st of July. It was abused, even in England, by persons who, under pretence of criticising its structure and details, only vented their hatred of the great principle of popular right and liberty upon which it was founded. Don Pedro, with a view to prevent a disputed succession in Portugal, directed, in his act of abdication, that his daughter should espouse, and share the throne with, don Miguel. This compromise failed: the faction of Miguel and the queen-dowager, aided by the intrigues and gold of the French cabinet and its ministers at Lisbon, conspired against the regency and the constitution, and persuaded some Portuguese regiments to desert into Spain, where they proclaimed and swore allegiance to don Miguel as king of Portugal. The rebellion would have been easily put down by the constitutionalists, if the rebels were not sheltered beyond the frontier, and equipped by the Spanish government for invasion. The Spanish government, in answer to the remonstrances of the Portuguese regency and the British government, disavowed and condemned the acts of its officers on the frontier, promised a faithful observance of its duties as a friendly power, and continued to aid the rebels with arms, equipments, and even men, more flagrantly than

ever. The organisation, equipment, and reinforcement of an invading force was equivalent to an invasion: M. de Palmella, the Portuguese minister in London, applied to the British government for military aid, on the faith of ancient alliance and express treaty; and, on the 11th of December, lord Bathurst in the house of lords, Mr. Canning in the house of commons, brought down a message from the king, reciting the faithless and hostile proceedings of the Spanish government, and calling upon parliament to support him in maintaining the faith of treaties towards Portugal, his oldest ally.

Mr. Canning, in moving the usual address on the king's message next day, developed and proved the obligation upon England to come to the aid of Portugal. "There are," said he, "two, and but two causes, which can neither be compromised, nor passed over, nor adjourned: these causes are, adherence to the national faith, and regard for the national honour."

After going over the provisions of the subsisting treaties in detail, he called attention to "the war, not of contending nations, but of conflicting principles, — the war, not of armies but of opinions" — which then divided Europe; and concluded his speech as follows: — "If into that war this country shall be compelled to enter, we shall enter into it with a sincere and anxious desire to mitigate rather than exasperate; and to mingle only in the conflict of arms, not in the more fatal conflict of opinion. But I much fear that this country (however earnestly she may endeavour to avoid it) could not, in such case, avoid seeing ranked under

her banners all the restless and dissatisfied of any nation with which she might come in conflict. It is the contemplation of this new *power* in any future war, which excites my most anxious apprehension. It is one thing to have a giant's strength, but it would be another to use it like a giant. The consciousness of such strength is undoubtedly a source of confidence and security; but, in the situation in which this country stands, our business is not to seek opportunities of displaying it, but to content ourselves with letting the professors of violent and exaggerated doctrines on both sides feel that it is not their interest to convert an umpire into an adversary. The situation of England amidst the struggle of political opinions which agitates more or less sensibly different countries of the world, may be compared to that of the ruler of the winds as described by the poet: —

——— ' Celsâ sedet Æolus arce,
Sceptra tenens; mollitque animos, et temperat iras.
Ni faciat, maria ac terras cœlumque profundum
Quippe ferant rapidi secum, verrantque per auras.'

The consequence of letting loose the passions, at present chained and confined, would be to produce a scene of desolation which no man can contemplate without horror; and I should not sleep easy on my couch, if I were conscious that I had contributed to precipitate it by a single moment.

" This, then, is the reason — a reason very different from fear, the reverse of a consciousness of disability — why I dread the occurrence of hostilities in any part of Europe, — why I would bear

much, and forbear long, — why I would (as I have said) put up with almost any thing that did not touch national faith and national honour; — rather than let slip the furies of war, the leash of which we hold in our hands, — not knowing whom they may reach, or how far their ravages may be carried. Such is the love of peace which the British government acknowledges; and such the necessity for peace which the circumstances of the world inculcate! But I will push these topics no further.

"I return, in conclusion, to the object of the address. Let us fly to the aid of Portugal, by whomsoever attacked, because it is our duty to do so; and let us cease our interference where that duty ends. We go to Portugal, not to rule, not to dictate, not to prescribe constitutions, — but to defend and preserve the independence of an ally. We go to plant the standard of England on the well known heights of Lisbon. Where that standard is planted, foreign dominion shall not come."

The house was with him. He felt this, and surpassed the eloquence of his opening speech in the frankness and fervour of his reply. Sir Robert Wilson and Mr. Baring supported the address, but condemned the government for having allowed the French to usurp and retain the occupation of Spain. "It would be disingenuous," said Mr. Canning, "not to admit that the entry of the French army into Spain was, in a certain sense, a disparagement, an affront to the pride, a blow to the feelings, of England; and it can hardly be supposed that the government did not sympathise on that occasion with the feelings of the people. But I

deny that, questionable or censurable as the act might be, it was one which necessarily called for our direct and hostile opposition. Was nothing then to be done? Was there no other mode of resistance than by a direct attack upon France — or by a war to be undertaken on the soil of Spain? What, if the possession of Spain might be rendered harmless in rival hands — harmless as regards us — and valueless to the possessors? Might not reparation for disparagement be obtained, and the policy of our ancestors vindicated, by means better adapted to the present time? If France occupied Spain, was it necessary, in order to avoid the consequences of that occupation, that we should blockade Cadiz? No. I looked another way: I sought materials of compensation in another hemisphere. Contemplating Spain such as our ancestors had known her, I resolved, that if France had Spain, it should not be Spain 'with the Indies.' I called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old."

Never, perhaps, did political eloquence obtain a brighter ascendant on a great occasion over a great deliberative assembly. Only two persons of known names, Mr. Hume and Mr. Bankes, remained untouched. Mr. Hume, a useful and efficient member of parliament within the limited range of his ideas and faculties, so far from reaching the views, did not always understand the language, of the minister; and, in one instance, burlesqued the expression of Mr. Canning into his own vocabulary, with an unsuspecting illiterate homeliness which afforded

amusement to the house of commons. Mr. Bankes seemed to fear the suspicion of being gained by the minister's eloquence. He, however, before and since, has often allowed himself to be won by a very inferior strain of ministerial oratory, when recommended by bigoted principles or some ignoble cause.

The address was carried, with only four dissentients, on the 12th of December; and on the 25th, the first detachment of British troops were anchored in the Tagus. On the 13th, parliament adjourned over to the 8th of February.

The expedition to Portugal decisively and almost immediately effected its purpose. The treachery and dissimulation of Ferdinand gave way to his fears. The French government at the same time recalled from Madrid the diplomatic agent of its intrigues; and both the independence and the constitution of Portugal were for the time delivered.

But the effect of the armament fell far short of the sensation produced by the British minister's speech. In spite of the penal prohibitions with which despotism surrounds itself on the Continent against the English press, the speech found its way into Spain and Italy, and alarmed to consternation tyranny and its abettors at Paris, Madrid, and Vienna. From that moment the heart and hope of liberal Europe were embarked in the ministry of Mr. Canning.

At home the prospects of his administration were also flattering. The internal state of the country was, on the whole, favourable. The national re-

sources began to rally. Capital and credit were once more in a state of promising if not complete activity. The workman obtained employment and wages adequate to his subsistence.

The duke of York died of dropsy, after an illness of some weeks, and much suffering, on the 5th of January, 1827. Standing in the relation of heir presumptive to the throne; obstinately and obtusely fortified against all concession to the Catholics; serving as a ready and authoritative medium for toryism and intolerance to reach, unobserved, the royal ear; his death had a great influence upon the state of parties, and was especially favourable to the ascendant of Mr. Canning. He, some weeks only before he died, and when his illness had already commenced, strenuously urged the king to render the government uniform and anti-Catholic; in other words, to dismiss Mr. Canning: and, had he recovered, Mr. Canning must have ceased to be foreign minister, or the duke to be commander-in-chief.* The duke of York was not without personal good qualities, which scarcely deserved the name of private virtues, and were overclouded by his private vices. He was constant in his friendships; — but who were his friends and associates? Were they persons distinguished in the state, in literature, in science, in art, or even in his own profession of arms? Were they not the companions and sharers of his dissipations and prodigalities? He did not

* Speech of Mr. Canning. — Supplementary volume of Mr. Stapleton.

exact from his associates subserviency or form; but it was notorious that, from the meanness of his capacity, or the vulgarity of his tastes, he descended very low before he found himself at his own social level. His services to the army as commander-in-chief were beyond all measure over-rated. Easy access, diligence, a mechanical regularity of system, which seldom yielded to solicitation, and never discerned merit; an unenvying, perhaps unscrupulous, willingness to act upon the advice and appropriate the measures of others more able and informed than himself; — these were his chief merits at the Horse-guards. But, it will be said, he had an uncompromising, conscientious fidelity to his public principles; — this amounts to no more than that his bigotry was honest and unenlightened. His death, perhaps, was opportune; his non-accession fortunate for the peace of the country and the stability of his family on the throne. Alike incapable of fear and foresight, he would have risked the integrity of the United Kingdom, rather than concede the Catholic claims; and the whole monarchy, rather than sanction reform. It would be easy to suggest a parallel, and not always to his advantage, between the constitution of his mind and of that of James duke of York, afterwards James II., whose obstinate bigotry forced the nation to choose between their liberties and his deposition from the throne.

Parliament re-assembled on the 8th of February. The first important question brought under discussion was that of the corn laws. This subject, which the ministers had pledged themselves to

bring forward immediately on the meeting of parliament, was delayed in consequence of successive illnesses of Mr. Canning and lord Liverpool. It was submitted by Mr. Canning in committee on the 1st of March. After a speech of great length and perspicuity of detail, he proposed a scale of the average prices of the various kinds of grain within the kingdom, at which, upon the payment of a specified scale of duties, foreign grain should be admissible into the market. The debate upon the question was protracted and desultory. There were almost as many theories as speakers. Ministers took the medium price of wheat at 60*s.*; the landed interest would have it higher; the manufacturing, lower; and others would operate upon the currency, not upon corn. After several debates, the ministerial measure passed the house of commons by large majorities.

Sir Francis Burdett was charged with the petition and claims of the Irish Catholics. Circumstances appeared favourable to the question: the death of the duke of York; the absence and illness of lord Liverpool; the increasing influence of Mr. Canning; the organised force, union, and determination of the whole Catholic population of Ireland; the support of emancipation, and apprehended danger from its denial expressed by the leading Irish Protestants; — all augured well for the success of the petitioners. But the tone and attitude of the Catholics exasperated the prejudices rather than appealed to the justice or the prudence of the English people; the table of the house of commons was loaded with anti-Catholic petitions; and after

two nights' discussion, the resolution proposed by sir Francis Burdett was rejected by a majority of four. The only circumstance which distinguished this debate was a slight collision between the master of the rolls and Mr. Canning. Sir John Copley represented the religious intolerance, — the *odium theologicum*, — of the university of Cambridge, and thought it meet to argue the Catholic question in a congenial spirit. He accordingly drew, not upon his own opinions and resources, but upon a party pamphlet, curious for the absence of truth, charity, and manners, and addressed to Mr. Canning by a great clerical gladiator of the day in the arena of pamphleteering. The speech of the master of the rolls, occupied chiefly with the question of securities, which was not then before the house, and directed chiefly against Mr. Canning, was irrelevant, disingenuous, and unfriendly. He borrowed not only the reasoning, but the temper and personalities, of the theologian. Mr. Canning, after disposing of the argument and the attack, vindicated himself ironically for his not having concerted securities with the pope, by reading a grave law opinion signed R. Gifford and J. S. Copley, the king's attorney and solicitor, denouncing against him (Mr. Canning) the penalties of *præmunire* if he answered a complimentary note which his holiness, on his election, had addressed to the king. The master of the rolls, as if still inspired by the pamphlet, rose twice, to say that the opinion was private, and the disclosure a breach of confidence. Mr. Canning maintained that it was official, and he had therefore a right to use it, more especially

against one of its authors: and two persons, who had entered the house friends, left it with feelings of alienation.

The health of lord Liverpool was by this time in a hopeless state. Seized with paralysis in February, he partially recovered; but had a relapse more severe than his first illness. From the middle of February to the 28th of March, no step was taken to supply his place at the head of the government. On the 28th of March, Mr. Canning was summoned to Windsor by the king. Mr. Canning, knowing and deferring to the king's opinion on the Catholic claims, proposed that the administration should be constituted upon the principle of lord Liverpool's; viz. that the Catholic should not be a cabinet question. The king further required that a peer holding the opinions of lord Liverpool on the Catholic claims should supply his place. Mr. Canning, whose pretensions would thus be passed over, declared, that if an opinion favourable to the Catholics was to be a disqualification for the office of prime minister, he would not be the individual in whose person that principle of exclusion should be established, and advised the king to form an anti-Catholic administration. The king dissented, and Mr. Canning took his leave.

The house of commons and the public voice were still more decisively in favour of Mr. Canning's succession to lord Liverpool in 1827, than of his succession to lord Castlereagh in 1822. His foreign administration had, in the mean time, obtained him, over living statesmen, an European supremacy, and

restored the ancient lustre of English counsels which his predecessor had tarnished. Every improvement, legislative or administrative, in the economy of trade and other sources of public wealth, was counselled in the cabinet, and carried in parliament, by Mr. Canning and his immediate friends. Mr. Canning, then, had every claim of talent, service, and estimation, to take the vacant place at the head of the government. He had not even a rival in the field; but the opposition to him was, notwithstanding, envenomed and strong: it proceeded not from those to whom he had been systematically opposed for years, but from his colleagues in the cabinet, and from the party of which he had so long been the redeeming ornament and support. The borough oligarchy, the bench of bishops, and that portion of the government which had the same horror of freedom in religion and in trade, looked forward to the appointment of Mr. Canning with dismay, and laboured to prevent it. This party could supply but two names having the shadow of pretension — Mr. Peel and the duke of Wellington.

Mr. Peel was qualified by talents, character, and intolerance; but — the son of a manufacturer whose conspicuous wealth and social vicinage provoked still more the jealousies of caste both in the oligarchy and in the king — his blood had not yet descended to a sufficient distance from the fountain-head of commercial industry. The duke of Wellington, then, was the only candidate; — but so glaring were his disqualifications, that his name

was studiously kept back. The opinion and feeling of the public would revolt against the proposal to intrust the complex rights and delicate principles of a jealous civil constitution to the hands of a man accustomed to the obedience, and affecting the rudeness, of the camp, and in preference to a statesman whose claims were transcendant.

Intrigue, however, was not idle in the duke's behalf. His immediate satellites, male and female, caballed and calumniated for him in political coteries, and within whispering distance of the royal ear; whilst the duke of Newcastle, furnished, it was said, with powers of attorney from the dukes of Rutland and Northumberland, and other oligarchs, in a formal audience threatened the king with his boroughs and his displeasure, if Mr. Canning should be appointed. Meetings took place between the duke of Wellington and Mr. Canning, with the professed object of removing the impression upon Mr. Canning's mind, of the hostile spirit of the duke and his friends; but with the real and secret view of drawing from Mr. Canning, in the course of long conferences on the same topic, the expression of a wish "that the duke should take the government." * The manœuvre failed; and Mr. Peel, on the 9th of April, by command of the king, saw Mr. Canning for the purpose of naming one "whose appointment would solve all difficulties," — the duke of Wellington. † The bold plunge proved as fruitless

* Mr. Stapleton's supplementary volume.

† The duke of Wellington all this time declared to Mr. Canning that he was wholly out of the question. Mr. Can-

as the experimental manœuvre. Mr. Canning peremptorily objected to a military premier; and, on the following day, the king commissioned him to "propose a plan for the re-construction of the administration."

A ministry on the principle of conceding the Catholic claims was impracticable: the no-popery party was too strong, and the king too reluctant. Mr. Canning, therefore, applied to his former colleagues, proposing to them an adherence to the principles of lord Liverpool's government. Mr. Peel had declared to Mr. Canning, some days before, with a frankness which Mr. Canning acknowledged and applauded in the house of commons, that with Mr. Canning, or any other friend of the Catholics, prime minister, the principle of lord Liverpool's government would be destroyed, — the Catholic

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ning, in one of his letters to the duke, says, — "Your grace emphatically says that *your* being at the head of the government was 'wholly out of the question.' I learned this opinion of your grace with sincere pleasure. The union of the whole power in the state, civil and military, in the same hands (for your grace as prime minister could never have effectually divested yourself of your influence over the army), would certainly, in my opinion, have constituted a station too great for *any subject*, however eminent, or however meritorious; and one incompatible with the practice of a free constitution. Nothing would have induced me to serve under such a form of government; and I am rejoiced to find that your grace's opinion was always against such an arrangement. *But I confess I am surprised that, such being your grace's fixed opinion, it should nevertheless have been proposed to me, as it was more than once, and up to the 9th of April inclusive, to concur in placing your grace at the head of the government.*"

claims would have gained — and he, as their opponent, should therefore decline office. Lord Eldon said he was long anxious to resign, from his advanced age, and wished to remain in office only about four months, to wind up the business of his court. Lord Bathurst said he wished to confer with Mr. Canning. Lord Melville's answer was not decisive. Lord Bexley accepted. Lord Westmoreland would not pledge himself until he knew who were to be his colleagues. The duke of Wellington asked who was to be the head of the government: Mr. Canning in reply said, that, as usual, the person intrusted with the king's commands would be the head of the administration. The duke, in rejoinder, desired to be excused from being included in the new arrangements.

It was the 11th of April; parliament would adjourn on the 12th; and some decisive arrangement was to be previously communicated to the house of commons. Mr. Canning, on the morning of the 12th, went to the king's closet with the resignations of the duke of Wellington, lord Westmoreland, lord Bexley, and Mr. Peel, already sent in; and was not long with the king when he received those of lords Eldon and Bathurst. This looked like confederacy to intimidate: it completely failed; the king confirmed the appointment of Mr. Canning. In the evening a new writ was moved for the borough of Harwich, vacated by Mr. Canning, on his appointment as first lord of the treasury; and the announcement was cheered again and again by the great majority of the house of commons.

Of the Liverpool cabinet there remained only lord Harrowby, and Messrs. Huskisson, Robinson, and Wynn. Lord Melville resigned in the course of the evening, avowing, with singular candour, the instinct upon which he acted; — he doubted the stability of the new arrangements. Four members of the household, and nine no-popery subalterns, with the same instinct as lord Melville, or the fear of dismissal, also resigned.

The last vacancy made, and the first supplied, was in the office of lord Melville. Mr. Canning, next morning, effected the appointment of the duke of Clarence as lord high admiral of England. This nomination of the heir presumptive struck the recusants with dismay. The coolness between Mr. Canning and sir John Copley appears to have endured only twenty-four hours *: the master of the rolls was appointed chancellor, with a peerage, by the title of baron Lyndhurst. Lord Anglesey was appointed master-general of the ordnance, with a seat in the cabinet, as successor to the duke of Wellington. Lord Bexley, upon reflection, withdrew his resignation. Mr. Sturges Bourne was appointed to the home department. To supply the remaining places, Mr. Canning opened a negotiation with lord Lansdowne: no official arrangements resulted; but lord Lansdowne, and the main body of the whigs, with sir Francis Burdett, volunteered

* Mr. Canning, soon after, concluded a letter to him with "*Phillpotto non obstante*, sincerely yours;" to which sir J. Copley replied, "Now as always — *minus* twenty-four hours — yours sincerely." — *Stapleton, supp. vol.*

their unofficial support of Mr. Canning's government. Upon Mr. Canning's appointment to the chancellorship of the exchequer, Mr. Robinson was called to the house of peers as lord Goderich, and lord Dudley succeeded Mr. Canning as foreign secretary.

The house of commons re-assembled on the 1st of May. The mutual exchanges of place by the two great parties had a whimsical effect: the late opposition seemed to think there was something laughable in the change; but this perception of the ridiculous was not shared on the other side. There was a numerous attendance both of members and strangers, in the vague anticipation of something interesting. Mr. Peel took advantage of a motion for a new writ to state the motives of his resignation: he relied chiefly on the altered circumstances in favour of the catholics. His explanation was received with applause. His brother-in-law, Mr. Dawson, was less fortunate: he attacked the new ministry, and its coalition with the whigs, in a tone and temper contrasting strangely with the liberal feelings of which he has the reputation in every relation of life without the precincts of the house of commons. Mr. Canning detailed the circumstances which preceded his appointment. "If," said he, "I had submitted in my person to the principle of exclusion as a friend to the catholic claims, I should have dishonoured myself; — such a submission would have been a badge of helotism, and the indelible disgrace of my political life." A tone of mutual and marked kindness was observable between him and Mr. Peel. Sir Francis Burdett and

Mr. Brougham vindicated their disinterested support of Mr. Canning's administration, as likely to promote enlightened principles of government both at home and abroad, and especially the cause of religious liberty.

The house of lords met on the following day. Lord Ellenborough called upon the ex-ministers to explain their conduct. An outpouring of explanations followed. The duke of Wellington began: he spoke at great length, and read part of a correspondence between himself and Mr. Canning. The main points of his explanation were the cold and formal tone of Mr. Canning's proposal; the slight offered to him by Mr. Canning, who withheld from him explanations which he gave lord Westmoreland! and "his (the duke's) conviction that the principle of lord Liverpool's government would be abandoned eventually."—"As to the motives imputed to him of having resigned because he was not himself appointed prime minister," he made his memorable declaration, that it was "a station with respect to which he was wholly out of the question;—to which he was unaccustomed;—in which he was *not wished;*—for which he was *unqualified.* My lords," said he, "I should have been mad, or worse than mad, if I had thought of such a thing."*

Lord Bexley said he was apprehensive of not having the same freedom of opinion in opposing the

* This is the version in what appeared to be an authorised report of his speech. In some of the reports given by the newspapers, he is made to call it "an insane project, which certain individuals, for their own base purposes, had imputed to him."

catholic claims; but that, discovering his error, he retracted his resignation. Lord Bathurst pleaded the resignations of his colleagues, and his objection to a pro-catholic premier. Lord Westmoreland alleged his opposition to the catholics. Lord Melville asked whether he ought to have joined an administration of which he doubted the stability. All concurred in denying, with a coarse violence of language which they called indignation, the common rumour, that they resigned by concert. Lords Goderich, Lansdowne, and Anglesey, vindicated the new administration and their own conduct. Lords Londonderry and Winchelsea, and the duke of Newcastle, attacked Mr. Canning in a style of intemperate folly and clownish personality, which might excite surprise if there existed any natural connection between sense, breeding, and a peerage.

These explanations were severely canvassed by the public. The duke of Wellington asserted ignorance of the intended head of the new government, at a moment when any other man living, in his situation, — having had several conferences with Mr. Canning on the subject, — must have well known who would be that head. He alleged as a matter of surprise and offence to him the formal tone of Mr. Canning's proposal, at a moment when, as he well knew (but the public did not know), the hostility of his adherents, and his own participation in their intrigues, had provoked the resentment of Mr. Canning, The duke of Wellington's anticipations of the abandonment of the Liverpool policy towards the catholics were realised, — but by himself. It was strange that he should never have thought of

being prime minister, and been wholly ignorant of the movements of his friends to procure his appointment, at a moment when he was named expressly, and more than once, to Mr. Canning by his confidential friend Mr. Peel, as the person whose appointment "would solve all difficulties." Among these singularities in the explanation and conduct of the duke of Wellington, it is not the least curious that, after pronouncing himself disqualified in 1827, he should have thought himself qualified in 1828, in spite of the dilemma to which he had reduced himself, of disqualification on the one side, and madness or something worse on the other.

The only particular which demands reference in the other explanations is the denial of concert or confederacy by all those who resigned. The coincidence was suspicious, and they admitted that it was singular. What constitutes confederacy, may present itself as a nice and doubtful question to a mind exercised in equity, like that of lord Eldon; but to common apprehensions there appeared in the disclaimer that obliquity which logicians call proving too much, and which is equally fatal to reasoning and to testimony.

The seceders from Mr. Canning greatly overrated their weight with the public. The appointment of the duke of Wellington to high civil office was, to adopt his own expression, "not wished." The administrative capacity of Mr. Peel, and his peculiar usefulness in the career of law reform which he had begun, made his resignation a subject of regret; but, for the other seceders, they were regarded by the intelligent and reflecting among the

people as clogs upon the march of knowledge and improvement in the public counsels. Their only strength was in the hold which their hostility to the catholics gave them on popular prejudice and the mind of the king. But the no-popery principle, and the clubbed intellect of the party, not only failed to supply the materials of a cabinet, but could not even muster an opposition in the house of commons. The warfare of opposition consisted there in desultory and distempered sallies by disappointed subalterns of the late administration.

The chief strength of the seceders lay in the house of lords. Their attacks here were directed with all the asperity of the house of commons, and more concert and organisation. They found a powerful auxiliary where they could scarcely have expected it. Lord Grey made a formal declaration that he withheld his confidence from the new ministry. This was an unexpected and serious blow. It shook the confidence of the public in the new arrangements. It was such a blow as lord Chatham, by a deliberate formal declaration of the same kind, gave the first Rockingham administration. The two cases have a striking resemblance. Both ministries were partial conquests over an exclusive and vicious system of government; — both had to contend with a court oligarchy and an adverse bias in the mind of the sovereign; — in both cases there was a present compromise of principles with a view to their future triumph; and a certain analogy of public station and personal character warrants the supposition that lord Grey, like lord Chatham, was influenced by personal ambition and impatient pride. The effect,

however, was chiefly felt by his own party — the whig allies of Mr. Canning. The uncompromising consistency, high ground, and stately solitude of lord Grey, gave a seeming air of littleness and desertion to those who had left his side to group themselves behind the minister.

A meeting of bishops was convened, soon after the elevation of Mr. Canning, at Lambeth palace, to receive from the archbishop of Canterbury and bishop of London the king's declaration that he was "firmly fixed as his father had been in his opposition to the pretensions of the papists." This assurance of the king, avowed and asserted in a tone of bold defiance by the bishop of London in the house of lords, justifies both Mr. Canning and the whigs in reference to the catholics. It was evident that emancipation, as Mr. Canning said, was a question which could succeed by winning, not by forcing, its way; and that any attempt to force would only throw it back. The catholics viewed it in the same light. Attempts were made, by the most violent opponents of emancipation, to urge the discussion of the catholic claims; but the catholics were not so simple as to take counsel of their enemies. The repeal of the test and corporation acts was another question with the compromise of which the whigs were reproached; but the question did not press, the grievance was light, and an overwhelming counterpoise was gained against practical exclusion and intolerance. The third subject of compromise and reproach was parliamentary reform; but reform at the time was abandoned by the people as well as by the whigs. Under these

circumstances, some of the whigs took office after the minister had firmly seated himself, and the session had advanced towards its close. Lord Lansdowne became secretary for the home department; lord Carlisle, privy seal; and Mr. Tierney, master of the mint.

As the ministry became more firm and compact, the opposition to it became, not more envenomed, for that could hardly be, but more ably directed. Mr. Peel threw aside his candour, his moderation, and his kindness, to take up the weapons hitherto used only by his subalterns around him. "I rejoice," said Mr. Canning, "that the standard of opposition is raised openly. I prefer direct hostility to hollow professions and a pretended neutrality;" and the words were received with responsive cheers, which must have told Mr. Peel that intolerant toryism was a hopeless cause. In the house of lords, however, the tories were numerous as well as adroit, and they obtained a victory by manœuvring and surprise.

Two questions only remained for consideration at the close of the month of May,—the statement of the finances in the house of commons, and the passing of the corn bill in the house of lords. Mr. Canning, as chancellor of the exchequer, brought forward the supplies and ways and means, on the 1st of June. His plan was, in substance, a continuance of the system of the preceding year; and it was sanctioned by the house almost as a vote of confidence in the minister. The corn bill was brought forward in the house of lords on the same day. It came recommended to the ex-ministers by the sanc-

tion, if not authorship, of their late and lauded colleague, lord Liverpool; no one thought of its being opposed by them: and it was, in fact, unopposed on the first and second readings. The committee is the stage in which a bill which could not be directly opposed, may yet be stabbed insidiously, or cut and hacked in detail. Several amendments were proposed and rejected. The duke of Wellington submitted an amendment, *sanctioned, he announced, by Mr. Huskisson.* The bill provided the admission of corn at all times upon payment of a duty proportioned to the average home-market price; but the duke's clause would absolutely exclude warehoused corn until the average price rose to 66*s.* a quarter. This was destructive of the bill, and therefore resisted by lord Goderich, the ministerial leader in the house of lords. There were, doubtless, in the house of commons selfish or uninformed landowners, who would think only of their rents in the midst of an over-worked and famished population. These, however, were outnumbered by landowners more enlightened, and by the representatives of trading wealth and industry; and the government was enabled to make some progress in that house towards a system which should enable the labourer to subsist by the sweat of his brow. But in the house of peers all are lords of the soil, interested in keeping up the price of food; and selfish motives, combining with party spirit and the alleged sanction of Mr. Huskisson, obtained the duke of Wellington's clause a majority. Mr. Huskisson wrote to the duke of Wellington a letter, denying that he had given his sanction to the clause. The duke of Wellington, in

reply, persisted in asserting that the clause was sanctioned by Mr. Huskisson. A correspondence ensued. Mr. Huskisson pointed out to the duke where he was mistaken; and brought him, with difficulty, to acknowledge a mistake which was plain to the simplest understanding. But the duke of Wellington did not the less persevere in his clause:—in short, the seceders, whether from a lucky hazard or secret contrivance, found they had a majority against Mr. Canning; and so disfigured the bill of their dear and revered colleague, lord Liverpool, that it was abandoned by lord Goderich. The violence of war has its horrors, but it has also its laws and honour;—whilst the unredeemed duplicity and meanness of party ambition and intrigue cannot be contemplated without unqualified disgust.

The tory party rather lost than gained by this defeat of Mr. Canning. Their rejection of the corn bill would leave the people exposed to the contingency of a famine during the summer; and their conduct was, on this account, regarded as factious and odious. To provide against a scarcity during the recess, a temporary bill was brought in by Mr. Canning, and passed expeditiously through both houses. The introduction of the second bill led to very free strictures on the conduct of the duke of Wellington. Some, among whom were Mr. Canning, regarded his conduct as that of one who was an instrument in the hands of persons more crafty and expert in the tactics of party; whilst others declared that no extent to which ignorance on a given subject could be duped or practised on would excuse the duke of Wellington's persisting to take

unscrupulous advantage of a vote which he had carried by an acknowledged imposition and surprise; of which he was, it may be admitted, unconscious in the first instance, but which he was afterwards brought to comprehend. Parliament was prorogued by commission on the 2d of July.

The session thus closed, with few acts of permanent legislation, was distinguished and enlivened by the strife of contending eloquence, passion, and party. But he who was foremost and most conspicuous in the strife—he who was the object of public hopes and favouring wishes from Cadiz to the Acropolis, — was fast sinking to the grave. The person of Mr. Canning was evidently wasting for some time. The ardour of his mind and the new ambition of his place overcame or concealed from him the inroads upon his health. Parliament had no sooner risen, than his illness became decided. It would seem as if the heat and clangor of debate animated and sustained him beyond nature and his stamina. After some confinement at his own house, he retired for quiet and change of air to the duke of Devonshire's villa at Chiswick; — and here, on the 8th of August, when only four months prime minister, he expired.

This was a melancholy consummation. When he had unmanacled his genius from the jealous inferiority and bad principles of an oligarchy to which a vicious system of government and his own ambition in an evil hour had enslaved him; when he had toiled long, and at last reached the highest sphere of his hopes — but before he could yet enjoy his conquest, or give lustre to his eleva-

tion, — his life and genius were extinguished. It is commonly said that Mr. Canning's days were shortened by the ceaseless malice and systematic vexations of his opponents within, and their slanderous scurrility without, the walls of parliament. Where are the proofs or the presumptions? If Mr. Canning had the susceptibilities, he had also the courage and force, of impassioned temperament. There is, doubtless, in the world much of moral anomaly and evil; but it would be too much to suppose that this deadly hold was accorded to grovelling upon superior natures. His death spread disappointment and mourning, not only over his country, but over Europe. England regretted in him the most accomplished orator whom the popular and better spirit of her constitution had yet produced* — a minister who could wield the energies

* The following sketch of Mr. Canning as an orator is given by Mr. Therry, in the memoir prefixed to his excellent edition of "Canning's Speeches:" —

"Mr. Canning was the most consummate orator of his country and age. He had cultivated eloquence as a liberal art, with the zeal of a student, and became one of its classic masters. Some may have exceeded him in particular qualities or powers; but he possessed an assemblage of endowments and acquirements which left all rivalry at a distance. He combined the free movement, spirit, and reality of British parliamentary debate, with the elaborate perfection of ancient oratory. Chatham can be estimated only by tradition and his effects — in the absence of all genuine remains. He must have possessed fervour, fancy, a superior reason, and great popular effect; but he exercised an art which he had himself created, and in which he had no rival of the first rank. His theatric delivery, and the lightnings of his eye, astonished and

and sustain the greatness of a free people abroad, and create new resources of advanced civilisation and refreshed industry at home. Liberal Europe

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frightened country gentlemen and noble lords to whom eloquence was a novelty and talent alarming. Fox, with the impetuous ardour of liberty, humanity, and his temperament — with the muscular vigour of his dialectics, simple and unadorned — would be the first orator in an assembly of a free people. Pitt, with his high-sounding amplifications, lofty sarcasms, and imposing manner, was supreme in dictating to a drilled majority or subservient council, and in imposing his authority upon the common order of minds. Burke has bequeathed the eloquence of his meditations, and the oracles of his philosophy, to sages and to posterity. But give Canning 'audience meet,' — the select representatives of a civilised free people — men capable of feeling deliberative eloquence as a cultivated liberal art, — and he brought into the field an assemblage of qualities beyond all single rivalry. Fire and imagination like Chatham, with a severer judgment and less artificial delivery; vigorous dialectics like Fox, with more of wit and fancy; dignity of manner, and measured declamation, like Pitt, with a livelier and lighter tone of pleasantry and sarcasm; much of the philosophy of Burke, with less prolixity, and a more scrupulous taste; — these are among the qualities which determine Mr. Canning's place in the first order *of orators*.

"He had studied with a congenial feeling those severe and eternal models — the remains of ancient eloquence. His elegance of expression was fastidious, without weakening its force; his wit was not so elaborately, so concentratedly brilliant as Sheridan's — but it was more prompt, redundant, and disposable, and, if it may be so said, more logical. Mr. Canning's reading was extensive and various, and his fancy flitted over history, fiction, and external nature, with quickness and felicity, — for illustration, citation, or metaphor. He had the tact to discern, and the dexterity to expose, what was weak or ridiculous on the adverse side; the art to push an opponent's

mourned in him the British minister who would at least leave the fair chances of combat to liberty and reason against leagued despotism and hireling force.

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simile or analogy *ad absurdum*, or to discover grandeur in what was meant for reproach (as in his retort that Proteus, with the versatility of his shapes, was in every shape the god); and, in fine, to lay bare, by rigorous syllogism, a fallacy in the envelope of a sophism or loose phrase.

"Mr. Canning not only meditated his speeches, but composed carefully (whether on paper or in his memory matters not) the passages of effect. His exquisite sense of elegance of style, of the precise value of words, and of oratorical collocation and cadence, will be felt and admired in the speeches revised by him, and discerned in those that remain in a state less perfect.

"Person and delivery are considerable parts of the orator. Mr. Canning's height was of the heroic standard; his form united elegance and strength; his motions and pace were firm and elastic, with a characteristic individualising disregard of all studied grace. His countenance was moulded in the happiest English style — comely, elegant, and simple; the profile gracefully defined; the face expressive, and mantling, as he spoke, with the changes of sentiment and emotion; the eye large and full, and if not charged with the lightning's flash, yet beaming with intelligence; the voice strong, flexible, and slightly muffled, so as to impart a softer melody, without affecting its clearness. His port, as he spoke, was sometimes negligent — often admirable — evincing a proud consciousness of the superiority of his cause, or the power of his eloquence."

CHAP. XXX.

1827-8—1830.

MR. CANNING was the sustaining spirit of the government which he had created. His ministry can scarcely be said to have survived him. It remained a sort of *simulacrum* of life and force,—

"Andava combattando ed era morte."

He was succeeded by lord Goderich as first lord of the treasury. Lord Goderich, like the Roman emperor, would be deemed worthy of the first place had he not attained it. The duke of Wellington hastily resumed the commandership-in-chief. This determines the value of his declaration, that he was influenced by no personal or private feeling towards Mr. Canning. Possibly he thought so; men are not always the surest judges of their own feelings. He may, therefore, not have been conscious of the envious irritation with which he beheld Mr. Canning's name in Europe wholly eclipse his own. The ascendant of the sabre on the continent, and especially in France, had given way to the civic wreath. Mr. Huskisson succeeded lord Goderich as colonial secretary, with the ministerial lead in the house of commons. The chancellorship of the exchequer was still vacant. It was understood to have been offered to Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Tierney,

and declined by them, because, it was said, they desired the appointment of lord Althorp. The nomination of Mr. Herries came by surprise upon the whig members of the cabinet. Lord Lansdowne, understanding that this appointment was dictated by the king to lord Goderich, — not counselled by lord Goderich to the king, — obtained an audience, tendered the seals of his office, but retained them on the assurance that Mr. Herries was duly made chancellor of the exchequer upon the advice of lord Goderich, and upon being graciously desired by the king to prevent the dissolution of the ministry by not resigning. The king, it may be presumed, sincerely wished the continuance of the ministry. New arrangements would subject him to exertion and fatigue.

The objections to Mr. Herries as chancellor of the exchequer, on the part of the whigs, were understood to be still more serious than the supposed irregularity of his appointment. He was brought up in the financial school of Mr. Vansittart, and had acquaintance and authority with Jews and jobbers. His intimacy with the loan-jobber Rothschild was notorious and avowed, but accounted for by his friends as originating in official relations with that person when he was at the head of the commissariat department. Again, the nomination of Mr. Herries was supposed to have proceeded primarily from an irresponsible quarter. A confidential medical attendant has the same opportunities of influence through the infirmities of a protestant, which a confessor has through the conscience of a catholic king. Mr. Herries, moreover, was an intolerant

tory; and it was said that, by a master-stroke of intrigue, he was introduced by those who had seceded from Mr. Canning, as a firebrand in the ministry for its destruction. This was borne out by the event — but the event has been called the guide of fools.

Lord Lansdowne, having submitted to the appointment of Mr. Herries, proposed to strengthen the whig party by bringing in lord Holland. This would not only have strengthened the whigs in council, but given weight and popularity to the administration at home and abroad. The suggestion was understood to have been readily adopted by lord Goderich; but the king over-ruled it.

Mr. Canning had pledged himself in the preceding session to an investigation and reform of the finances; lord Goderich proposed to redeem this pledge by the appointment of a committee of finance. It became necessary to select its chairman. Lord Althorp, a man of business, conversant with the subject, of independent conduct, perfect integrity, and the reputed head of an independent liberal party of country gentlemen, was proposed to lord Goderich by Mr. Tierney. Lord Goderich said it chiefly concerned the house of commons, and referred Mr. Tierney to Mr. Huskisson, the leader in that house. Mr. Huskisson approved the choice; and lord Althorp, having been applied to, expressed his willingness to undertake the duty. The subject was not yet mentioned to Mr. Herries, the chancellor of the exchequer, through what lord Goderich called an oversight. Mr. Herries acquiesced upon its being mentioned to him, but, as he sub-

sequently declared in the house of commons, his acquiescence was "not cordial." After twenty-four hours' reflection, his not cordial acquiescence changed to absolute dissent; and he finally informed lord Goderich that, with lord Althorp's adverse politics, and decided opinions on finance, in the chair of the committee, he should be thwarted in his operations as chancellor of the exchequer; that the communication to lord Althorp without his knowledge was a personal slight; and that he should resign if the appointment were persevered in. Mr. Huskisson, on the other hand, declared that he should resign if the choice did not fall upon lord Althorp. About the same time the victory of Navarino oppressed this distracted and feeble ministry with its éclat and embarrassments. Lord Goderich, in fine, unable to reconcile or decide between Messrs. Huskisson and Herries, wearied with his situation, deadened, it was said, to ambition by the loss of an only child, and disheartened by the near approach of the opening of parliament, resigned his office, and the ministry expired. Tory management, through its engine Mr. Herries, was the proximate cause of the dissolution of this ministry; but intrigue for once performed a charitable office, in precipitating hopeless infirmity to its inevitable doom. Lord Goderich resigned on the 8th of January. The duke of Wellington was sent for by the king; and commissioned, next day, to form an administration of which he should be himself the head.

The duke of Wellington recruited with the utmost facility. It is true the whigs went out; but the

leading friends of Mr. Canning remained in, and the seceding tories returned (with the exception of lord Eldon invalided) after a short exile which made return more sweet to places cherished and familiar as their firesides. The Wellington cabinet rendered justly memorable — it may be said immortalised — by a single measure, and the energy of its chief, stood as follows: — the duke of Wellington, first lord of the treasury; the right honourable Henry Goulburn, chancellor of the exchequer; lord Lyndhurst, lord chancellor; lord Bathurst, president of the council; lord Ellenborough, lord privy seal; the right honourable Robert Peel, secretary of state for the home department; earl Dudley, secretary of state for foreign affairs; the right honourable William Huskisson, secretary of state for the colonies; the right honourable John Charles Herries, master of the mint; viscount Melville, president of the board of control; the earl of Aberdeen, chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster; the right honourable Charles Grant, treasurer of the navy and president of the board of trade; viscount Palmerston, secretary at war; the duke of Clarence, lord high admiral.

The promotion of Mr. Goulburn's fatiguing mediocrity and humble usefulness created surprise, and the removal of Mr. Herries to the mint showed that he had taken the office of chancellor of the exchequer from other motives than qualification or choice. The friends of Mr. Canning, and especially Mr. Huskisson, lost character with the public. It seemed as if the opposition of Mr. Huskisson to Mr. Herries, respecting lord Althorp, had been not

adverse, but collusive, and he was but an accomplice in intrigue. Lord Dudley vindicated himself by saying that public not private feelings should govern in politics, and that it would be uncharitable "to immortalise hatred:" — but there are cases in which this paramount public conscience and excessive placability are suspicious or disgraceful.

The duke of Wellington cut his way through his own sentence of incapacity upon himself with the nonchalance of a soldier's logic. There was, he said, difficulty in obtaining a prime minister; his colleagues told him he was capable, and he therefore accepted the post. The duke disappointed expectation greatly to his advantage.

The session of parliament was opened by commission on the 29th of January. A single epithet in the commissioners' speech was the chief subject of debate. The battle of Navarino was characterised as "an untoward event." It is necessary to state briefly the circumstances which preceded and produced it. Christian Europe was shocked and scandalised by the barbarian atrocities of the Turks in Greece. Philhellenic associations, for the purpose of succouring the Greeks, were formed in every European capital. There were in them, doubtless, many persons of disinterested zeal; but they were also disgraced, and especially that of London, by quackery, rapacity, and peculation. It was clear that the only effectual interference would be that of the European governments. Mr. Canning accordingly directed his attention to the subject. The remonstrances of ambassadors at Constantinople were found unavailing. Community of

religion, and participation in the previous insurrections of the Greeks, afforded the emperor of Russia a pretext for assuming the exclusive tutelage. Mr. Canning, to guard against this, whilst he should rescue Greece, proposed a combined mediation by England, France, and Russia; and the duke of Wellington, charged with a special mission, signed a protocol with this view, in April, 1826, at St. Petersburgh. It was not, however, until the 6th of July in the following year, that the treaty of London, for an armed mediation between the Turks and Greeks was signed by the English, French, and Russian ministers. In the autumn of 1827, the allied squadrons constituted an imposing force in the Levant and the Archipelago, and endeavoured to give effect to the treaty of London. But the treaty was urged in vain by the ambassadors upon the divan, and by the allied admirals upon the Turkish commanders. Ibrahim continued and aggravated his atrocities in the Morea. The combined Egyptian and Turkish fleets were collected in the bay of Navarino, and blocked in there by the combined English, French, and Russian squadrons — the two latter respectively commanded by admirals Rigny and Heyden, and the whole commanded in chief by sir Edward Codrington. The Greeks accepted the armistice under the treaty. Ibrahim refused it, and continued to burn villages and put all to the sword. The allied admirals determined to enforce the armistice, and in order "to impose by their presence," pressed into the bay of Navarino upon the Ottoman fleet, on the 20th of October. A battle seemed inevitable yet each

side professed to have no hostile intention. The fire commenced by a few shots, said to be accidental; continued without plan or concert until it became general; and after four hours' fighting the bay was covered with the wreck of the Turkish and Egyptian ships. The news of the disaster did not dismay the sultan, or even ruffle his temper. He demanded reparation; and, with an approach to civilised usages, allowed the Christian ambassadors to depart in safety.

No amendment was proposed in the house of lords, and the debate was desultory. Lord Londonderry pronounced a panegyric upon the new military premier, who, he said, would "cut off the unsound parts if the dry rot should attack his government." The address was passed also in the house of commons without amendment or division. In this, as in the other house, the chief topic was the battle of Navarino, with the exception of some remarks, at once rhetorical and profound, which were drawn from Mr. Brougham by the phenomenon of a military prime minister.* It was on this occasion he used the phrase "the schoolmaster is abroad," which has penetrated wherever the English language is read or spoken. "These," said he, "are not times when the soldier only bears sway. A new power has arisen. The schoolmaster is abroad. I trust to him and to his primer, and do not fear the soldier with his bayonet."

In this, as in the former instance of ministerial change, all the chief actors entered into explana-

The duke of Wellington resigned the command of the army to his favourite Peninsular lieutenant, lord Hill.

tions, of which, as before, the main points have been anticipated. One incident only has been omitted as personal to Mr. Huskisson, and subsequent to the change. Mr. Huskisson declared, in an election speech at Liverpool, that before he joined the duke of Wellington he obtained "guarantees" from the duke. Upon the appearance of this expression in the newspapers, the duke of Wellington took fire, negatived the assertion with contemptuous indignation in his place in the house of lords, and asked what right Mr. Huskisson had to set himself above any other member of the cabinet. Mr. Huskisson received the rebuke with discreditable submission, and said, that when he used the word guarantee, he meant only the security of having his friends lord Dudley, lord Palmerston, and Mr. C. Grant with him in the cabinet. The explanation was pitiful.

That committee of finance, of which the chairmanship had proved so fatal, was in the mean time appointed on the motion of Mr. Peel, the leader in the house of commons. He introduced his motion with a comprehensive financial statement, from which it appeared that a reduction of forty-eight millions and a half in the debt, funded and unfunded, had taken place since 1815, and that the actual capital of the unredeemed debt was 777,476,000*l.* The labours of this committee were multifarious and important; and it reported several suggestions for the advantage of the public in the course of the session.

The widow of Mr. Canning received a peerage. When the estimates of the year were presented, it

was proposed that a pension of 3000*l.* a year should be granted to his second son as a provision for his family. The second son was preferred, from the perils to which the elder was exposed in the naval service.* The grant was agreed to by the great body of the house of commons. The opposition to it was ungracious and unjust. Mr. Canning had spent, not only his life, but his wife's fortune, the inheritance of his children, in the public service. It should be known, in justice to those who hold the higher offices under the crown, that their salaries fall short of the expenses to which they are subjected by the manners of the country, and a mischievous convention. This gorgeous scale of living has the double effect of giving an example and impulse to extravagance through every department of the public service, and of securing — perhaps by design — to private wealth, a monopoly of administration. A man vigilantly prudent might, perhaps, have lived within his income in Mr. Canning's situation; and it is known that he had no prodigal or expensive tastes; but it is also known that he had that utter carelessness of money through which fortune is not less effectually dissipated.

The duke of Wellington was not long minister when he met with a defeat. On the 26th of February, lord John Russell introduced, with an able speech, the consideration of the sacramental test and corporation acts, and moved that they should be referred to a committee of the whole house,

* Captain Canning was, not long afterwards, accidentally drowned.

with a view to their repeal. Arguments in favour of religious liberty have no longer any interest, when the conquest has been achieved; and those used in support of "the bulwarks of the church" would now be read with pity. In spite of the whole force and influence of ministers, including the ministerial emancipationists, the motion was carried by a majority of 237 to 193. This was a serious check soon after the opening of the campaign. Nothing remained for the ministers but to surrender their opinions or their places. They thought it their duty to keep their places, even at the sacrifice of their private opinions. Mr. Peel declared that he could not think of pressing his opinion against that of the majority, and joined lord John Russell in the profane work of rasing "the bulwarks of the church." An idle declaration to keep the peace towards the established church was introduced in the repeal bill, which was sent up as a cabinet measure to the house of lords. Supported by the prime minister, it was approved by the lords spiritual, but opposed by lord Eldon, who declared that, much as he had heard of "the march of mind," he never expected to see it march into their lordships' house, with the duke of Wellington and the bishops consenting parties. "For my part," said his lordship, "I will not give up the church: let that be the work of others; whether within or without the church I care not." After several attempts in the committee, to narrow the principle, and catch the conscience of the declarant under the bill, it passed, without opposition, through its remaining stages. The duke of Wellington recovered ground by the

success of his corn bill. It differed materially, as might be expected, from that of Mr. Canning in the preceding year, which had died of the effect of the duke of Wellington's amendment. The principle of protecting duties, instead of absolute prohibition, and of an ascending and descending (not fixed) scale, according to the fluctuations of price in the home market, was maintained; but the medium or pivot price, which Mr. Canning had taken at 60*s*., was raised by the duke of Wellington to between 64*s*. and 65*s*. The duke of Wellington was consistent: but the friends of Mr. Canning in the ministry were self-degraded. Mr. C. Grant, the president of the board of trade, spoke like one who felt the position in which he stood. He scarcely attempted to vindicate himself; and condemned the bill whilst he proposed it. It was, he said, not the best that could be framed; but the best that, under the circumstances, was likely to pass: it was a compromise between conflicting interests and opinions. He might have added, that it was a compromise between the friends of Mr. Canning and their places under the duke of Wellington. His speech, on the whole, was a laborious effort between the sincerity of his character and the embarrassments of his situation.

The effect of the repeal of the test and corporation laws upon the Catholic claims was urged with a curious diversity of opinion, during the discussion of that question. It was opposed by some as favouring, by others as injuring, the Catholic cause: and it was supported on the same opposite views of it effects. In point of fact and experience, it ap-

peared to exercise upon the other question no influence whatever. Sir Francis Burdett, on the 8th of May, moved a committee of the whole house on the Catholic claims. The motion was carried by a majority of 6, and rejected in the house of lords by a majority of 44, with no other novelty than that of an abortive conference on the subject between managers on the part of each house in the painted chamber.

Lord Londonderry has not the reputation of being singularly sagacious, and yet his judgment at the opening of the session respecting the efficacy with which the duke of Wellington would get rid of "dry rot in his cabinet," by excision or amputation, was prophetically borne out. Every attempt, however moderate, to correct imperfections or remove abuses, however flagrant, in the representation, was either resisted by majorities of the house of commons, or defeated in the house of lords. The borough of East Retford was convicted of gross and inveterate corruption; and it became a question whether the franchise should be extended to the adjoining hundred, or transferred to Birmingham. The ministers patronised the claims of the hundred, under the suspicion and imputation of what is called "a job" for the benefit of a great borough proprietor. Mr. Huskisson had pledged himself to vote for the transfer to Manchester; he accordingly voted against his colleagues; and, on his arrival at home from the house of commons, at two o'clock in the morning, addressed a letter, marked "private and confidential," and enclosed in a cabinet box, to the duke of Wellington. In this letter he said, that

after his vote on the East Retford question, he thought it his duty, "without loss of time, to afford him (the duke) an opportunity of placing his (Mr. Huskisson's) office in other hands." The duke received the letter at ten in the morning, and, without loss of time, like Mr. Huskisson, availed himself of the opportunity thus offered. He immediately laid Mr. Huskisson's letter, as a resignation, before the king. Mr. Huskisson was thunderstruck, and declared he never intended to resign, — "his letter was," he said, "private." The duke maintained it was to all intents and purposes a resignation, and official. Lord Dudley called on the duke, and told him "it was a mistake." The duke replied, — "It is no mistake, it can be no mistake, it shall be no mistake." Mr. Huskisson had the weakness, after this peremptory repulse, to offer explanation through lord Palmerston. It was of no avail; the duke was immovable. Mr. Huskisson, after this further mortification, had the incredible pertinacity to make a written appeal to the duke of Wellington, which led to a correspondence, and to a humiliating failure which Mr. Huskisson deserved, The duke of Wellington was evidently glad of the occasion to relieve himself from the superiority of an able colleague, but was clearly warranted in the course pursued by him. It is impossible to recall, without sadness, the fine understanding and profound science of Mr. Huskisson thus debased, and his life lost under circumstances so tragical and sudden, before he had the opportunity to retrieve his character by services worthy of him to his country and his species. Lords Dudley and Palmerston and Mr. C. Grant went

out with Mr. Huskisson. Their places were filled by lord Aberdeen, sir George Murray, sir Henry Hardinge, and Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald.

The intelligent portion of the public, and especially men of business, manifested a strong sense of the gross inconsistencies with reason and utility in the existing undigested mass of English jurisprudence. The question was brought under the notice of the house of commons by Mr. Brougham, at an early period of the session, in a speech which occupied near six hours in the delivery, and concluded with the proposal of an address to the king, requesting the issue of a commission of enquiry into the state of the law, and constitution of the courts. Petty errors of technicality and detail in this celebrated discourse were detected by the minute science which could not appreciate or comprehend the vast grasp of mind, the number and diversity of matters, and that rare faculty of order, or, if the word be allowable, of co-ordinance, which gave to it an unique character. The design of Mr. Brougham was not carried into effect; but two commissions were issued in the course of the session, for enquiry into the state of the common law, and the law of real property. The mere patches of law reform which have been, or are likely to be, the result of these commissions upon a pile of accumulated and complicated absurdity, scarcely deserve the name. The session was prorogued by commission on the 28th of July.

Two interesting topics of foreign policy were introduced in the speech of the commissioners;—war between Russia and Turkey, and the suspension of friendly relations with Portugal. The treaty of

London, which directly led to the battle of Navarino, being the work of Mr. Canning, the duke of Wellington availed himself of the opportunity to stigmatise it ambiguously in the king's speech. The vague word "untoward" was believed to have been a compromise with the friends of Mr. Canning in the cabinet. It may be reasonably argued, from the character of Mr. Canning's foreign policy, that the victory of Navarino, in his hands, would have the effect of bringing the barbarian councils of Turkey to reason, by the only means which can effectually reach barbarian apprehension — the exercise of force; whilst his fearless energy, and the opinion of enlightened Europe in his train, would have controlled the ambition of Russia. The duke of Wellington neutralised victory, and encouraged Turkish obstinacy, by what may be called an apology; and had not, in his foreign policy, the ascendant influence and energy requisite to keep down Russian ambition and pretensions. Accordingly, the emperor of Russia, disengaging himself from the treaty of London, declared war against Turkey on his own account, for objects which he said concerned him alone; and in the month of July had an army of 150,000 men beyond the Pruth, in successful march upon Constantinople.

In Portugal, affairs had taken a still more strange turn. It was supposed that foreign travel and advice had reclaimed Don Miguel, and he was accordingly named regent of Portugal, in the room of his sister. From Vienna he addressed to his sister assurances of his fidelity to "his lawful sovereign, and the established laws of Portugal;" and took London in

his way from Vienna to Lisbon. He passed several weeks in London; improved upon acquaintance; became even a sort of favourite,—like a ferocious beast whose instinct was tamed and overcome;—and, it was understood, addressed to the king at his departure a letter of thanks, in which he declared that if he attempted any thing in Portugal against the rights of his brother and niece, or against the constitution, he should be an usurper, a perjurer, and a wretch. Such precisely, if not more, he proved himself. Arrived at Lisbon in February, he immediately began the work of perjury and treason. His mother, who appears to have had an insane thirst of cruelty and blood, instantly resumed her influence over him. At their first meeting it was said that they literally licked each other, with the fondling savagery of a tigress and her cub. After a succession of intrigues and atrocities, the cortes were dismissed, the constitution abolished, Don Miguel proclaimed absolute king, and humanity, within the limits of Portugal, left a prey to this modern Nero. Don Pedro, in the mean time, wholly unprepared for a relapse of perfidy which he might have expected, sent his daughter, the young queen, with a retinue to Europe. She was grand-daughter of the emperor of Austria, and her destination in the first instance was Vienna. On her touching at Gibraltar, she was informed of the occurrences in Portugal, and her chief officers thought it advisable that she should proceed to England; where she was received in September with royal honours, and great kindness, by the government, the people and the king.

The Irish Catholics had been too wise, and, it may be presumed, too grateful, to embarrass Mr. Canning by pressing their claims. Lord Goderich was also their friend; but his administration did not inspire confidence. The effect of the change, however, though perceptible, was not serious: but no sooner were the duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel placed at the head of the government, than the machinery of agitation in Ireland was wound up to the highest pitch. The Association could not be officered or organised under the existing act; but the spirit and passions of the people, previously drilled, supplied the place of organisation. Pure despotism only can prevent national sentiment, when strongly felt, from manifesting and embodying itself.

The Catholic clergy had by this time completely identified themselves with the Association. As a stroke of false policy had predisposed, so meddling intolerance stimulated, the priests to obtain and exercise their present sway. Fanatical zeal, restless bigotry, simple good faith, and that trading *charlatanerie* in morals and religion, which flourishes in the United Kingdom under the name of cant, combined in a crusade against popish idolatry in Ireland. So sanguine in their hopes, or so bold in their effrontery, were the new crusaders, that they promised to subdue the Irish Catholics, in a year or two, to the protestant faith. Lord Roden, in the house of lords, opposed emancipation as unnecessary, because the Catholics of Ireland would soon be protestants. The ostensible means of "the second reformation" so called, were, educating the children of the Catholic poor, and distributing "the Bible

without note or comment." But under this evangelical disguise were practised intrigue, bigotry, and base arts. The naked starving catholic poor were tempted, by a corrupting charity, with food and clothes to prostitute their consciences, and to dress their children in the livery of apostacy.

It will not be supposed that the priests remained idle whilst proselytism was seducing their flocks, and depriving them of their subsistence. They used all their defensive means of spiritual authority and denunciation; and recantations of popish errors were followed by relapses and remorse. This desultory warfare led to what Mr. Wyse has happily termed "a new and fantastic spirit of polemical chivalry." The "biblicals" challenged the priests to public disputation, the priests accepted the challenge; the time, the place, and the laws of combat were mutually agreed upon; and champions tried their prowess against each other, before a crowd of spectators. The protestant combatants were for the most part methodists; not regular clergymen, or members of the established church. Methodists have a fervid contagious mysticism of vocabulary, and enthusiasm of tone, but no logic. This placed them at a disadvantage beyond their own congregations. The catholic priests, on the other hand, are trained as disputants in the logical subtleties of the schoolmen; and even in the opinion of sober-minded protestant spectators acquitted themselves well. Their own followers accorded them the palm. The stimulant of popular applause was too agreeable to be discontinued. They passed from the theological to the political arena, harangued at aggregate

and other catholic meetings, and were soon both the priests and the tribunes of the people.

The first display of their power, to use the expression of Mr. Sheil, "made the great captain start."* Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, who had vacated his seat for Clare by becoming a cabinet minister, reappeared on the hustings of his native county with every advantage of personal character, local influence of family and fortune, the support of the gentry of the county, advocacy of the catholic claims. But he was a member of the Wellington ministry; and the priests and the association, by their unbounded sway over the peasantry, not only drove him from the field before the close of the second day, but substituted in his place the disqualified catholic agitator, Mr. O'Connell.

The catholics were reproached with ingratitude for unseating one of their advocates. The reproach was unjust: they rejected not him, but the Wellington administration. His vote and speech were but a mockery, whilst the government to which he belonged was substantially based upon the principle of exclusion.

Were the assessor an expectant pliant Irish barrister, Mr. Fitzgerald, in spite of his minority, would have been returned, and upon plausible grounds; but Mr. Keatinge stood high in his profession, and independent of all party: he advised the sheriff according to the law of the land; and Mr. O'Connell was returned to abide the proper ordeal at the table of the house of commons. It was, however, certain that Mr. O'Connell would not be admitted to sit and

* Speech in the house of commons on the reform bill.

vote; but still his return was a master-stroke of party policy. It was such an appalling manifestation of catholic determination and force, as no anti-catholic minister would venture to encounter on a general election.

Mr. O'Connell was accustomed to give rash pledges; and, though a good pleading and consulting counsel, had no authority as a constitutional lawyer. His pledge, therefore, of his professional character, that he would assert his right to sit and vote, passed idly as the wind; but the elaborate argument and opinion of Mr. Charles Butler, one of the most eminent English lawyers, startled the public, and would startle a severely scrupulous judge. It is not that there was any doubt as to the legislative intention; but that the popery laws were a formless mass of enactments, heaped upon vanquished adversaries by blind passion and brute force, without unison, consistency, or the guiding light of consecutive design.

The term "agitators" was applied to the catholic leaders as a reproach and contumely. They adopted and wore it as a title of honour. This is a strong proof of the strength of a party, and an earnest of its triumph:—"Les héros Bataves," says Mirabeau, "qui fonderent la liberté de leur pays, prirent le nom de *gueux*, parceque le mépris de leurs tyrans avait prétendu les en flétrir..... Les amis de la liberté se parèront des injures de leurs ennemis." The success in Clare gave a new impulse to agitation. The act, which had been evaded by a change of form, had no sooner expired, at the close of the session, than the association resumed its adjourned meetings, with the machinery of its committees, and

organised branch associations throughout Ireland. A plan was formed, and executed with the aid and agency of the priests, to sever the bond between the catholic forty shilling freeholders and their landlords. Hitherto the landlords ordered their forty shilling voters to the hustings as they did their cattle to the market-place, and required their price for the one as for the other. They now clamoured about the wickedness of the agitators in encouraging tenants "to rebel against their landlords," and about the audacity of popish priests in meddling with elections. But the agitators and priests pursued their career. They told the forty shilling freeholders that they had a country, a religion, a vote; and a special fund in the hands of the association for their protection and relief against the threatened vengeance of their landlords. They framed and promulgated certain tests, of which the foremost was uncompromising opposition to the Wellington ministry, so long as the duke resisted emancipation; and without satisfactorily undergoing this criterion, no candidate was to have their support. The habitual system of nocturnal outrage and lawless violence, — even the local feuds and factions of the peasantry amongst themselves, — ceased at their word. It is an anomaly in terms, but not the less true in fact, that Ireland was pacified by agitation.

In England, it was a sort of fashion to talk contemptuously of the catholic association. There was, doubtless, in its oratory much extravagance and bad taste; but it was a political engine of great power, adapted to its purposes, and directed with energy and skill. What popular body, without mission,

without authority, with only its moral and intellectual force, has achieved so much? Two of its members were especially distinguished — Mr. O'Connell and Mr. Sheil. Mr. O'Connell had the advantage of long experience in Irish politics, — a perfect familiarity with Irish temperament in the common people, — a prompt, dexterous, rude eloquence, which could be humourous, vulgar, rhetorical, and abusive: his power over aggregate multitudes surpassed that of his colleague in agitation. Mr. Sheil, more educated, more accomplished, of higher aspiring, distinguished in literature, taking larger views and a superior tone of declamation, rising sometimes above his party and his cause to view emancipation as an imperial question, had more influence with the higher class of Irish catholics, and, through the publication of his speeches by the press, with the English people. The following vivid, yet faithful, description by him of the state of Ireland, at this period, produced a sensation in England: — "Does not a tremendous organisation extend over the whole island? Have not all the natural bonds by which men are tied together been broken and burst asunder? Are not all the relations of society which exist elsewhere gone? Has not property lost its influence, — has not rank been stripped of the respect which should belong to it, — and has not an internal government grown up which, gradually superseding the legitimate authorities, has armed itself with a complete domination? Is it nothing that the whole body of the catholic clergy are alienated from the state; and that the catholic gentry, and peasantry, and priesthood are all combined in one vast confederacy?

So much for catholic indignation while we are at peace:—and when England shall be involved in war ——I pause; it is not necessary that I should discuss that branch of the division, or point to the cloud which, charged with thunder, is hanging over our heads."

The government in England still appeared unmoved. The Irish government had no provocation to act. Agitation was at the highest pitch, but without infringing public order or the law. Lord Anglesea succeeded a popular viceroy: he came with all the odium of his appointment by the Wellington ministry, — of having given an obnoxious vote, — of having used an inconsiderate figurative expression in the warmth of debate; and his first appearance in Ireland was unpopular. But having taken his post, and looked around him, his just *coup-d'œil* and generous character dictated to him the course which he should pursue. Too honest, too humane, too enlightened to assume pretexts or create occasions for coercion, he soon became the most popular Irish viceroy.

The state of Ireland, as the summer advanced, bore a new, and still more awful, aspect. The Irish protestants, — not only orangemen, but some who had hitherto been liberal or neutral,—alarmed at the tone and attitude of the catholics, disgusted at the seeming supineness of the government, formed themselves into rival and hostile associations, under the name of Brunswick clubs; and the declamations of both parties, breathing defiance and menace, augured nothing short of civil war. It will be best here to borrow again the graphic language of Mr. Sheil.

"Two great rivals are brought into political existence, and enter the lists against each other. As yet they have not engaged in the great struggle — they have not closed in the combat; but, as they advance upon each other and collect their might, it is easy to discern the terrible passions by which they are influenced, and the fell determination with which they rush to the encounter. Meanwhile the government stand by, and the minister folds his arms as if he were a mere indifferent observer, and the terrific contest only afforded him a spectacle for the amusement of his official leisure. He sits as if two gladiators were crossing their swords for his recreation. The cabinet seems to be little better than a box in an amphitheatre, from whence his majesty's ministers may survey the business of blood."

The seeming inactivity of the government continued. Two incidents excited attention, but were too trifling or dubious to fix opinion. Mr. Dawson, the member for Derry, hitherto a zealous anti-catholic, declared, at a public dinner to his constituents, that he came to the conclusion of the necessity of emancipation, as the only means of restoring the supremacy of regular government and the laws in Ireland. He was secretary to the treasury, and the brother-in-law of Mr. Peel; but the catholic was an open question, his election was in peril from the catholics, and his speech might have been an unauthorised personal change of conduct for personal purposes.

The duke of Wellington had formed a friendly intimacy in Portugal with Dr. Curtis, the catholic

primate of Ireland. In answer to a letter from this prelate on the alarming state of Ireland, the duke expressed his anxiety to witness the settlement of the catholic question; but confessed that he saw no prospect of such a settlement. "If, however," says he, "we could bury it in oblivion for a short time, I should not despair of seeing a satisfactory result." The duke's letter may have been as wise, but it was also as obscure, as the oracles of the Dodonean oak, and left the question as it stood before. Dr. Curtis communicated it to the lord lieutenant. Lord Anglesey's opinion was long decided and pronounced. In answer to Dr. Curtis, after observing that the duke's situation was one of great difficulty, he said:—"I differ from the opinion of the duke, that an attempt should be made 'to bury in oblivion' the question for a short time. First, because the thing is utterly impossible; and next, if the thing were possible, I fear that advantage might be taken of the pause by representing it as a panic achieved by the late violent reaction, and by proclaiming that, if the government at once and peremptorily decided against concession, the catholics would cease to agitate, and then all the miseries of the last years of Ireland will have to be re-acted. What I do recommend is, that the measure should not be for a moment lost sight of; that anxiety should continue to be manifested; that all constitutional (in contradistinction to merely legal) means should be resorted to to forward the cause; but that, at the same time, the most patient forbearance—the most submissive obedience to the laws, should be incul-

cated, — that no personal and offensive language should be held towards those who oppose the claims. Personality offers no advantage — it effects no good; on the contrary, it offends, and confirms predisposed aversion. Let the catholic trust to the justice of his cause — to the growing liberality of mankind. . . My warm anxiety to promote the general interests of this country is the motive that has induced me to give an opinion and offer advice."

These occurrences took place during the month of December. In the beginning of January lord Anglesey was recalled, to be succeeded by the duke of Northumberland. The letter of lord Anglesey, conveying the soundest advice with the utmost kindness of tone, was published, with his consent, on the eve of his departure, and received by the catholics with grateful enthusiasm. It was, and is still, supposed to have been the cause of his recall. The supposition is incompatible with dates. Lord Anglesey's letter was dated the 25th, and his recall was dated the 28th of December, when the existence of the letter addressed to Dr. Curtis in the north of Ireland could not have been known in London. Other motives are assigned in the correspondence subsequently made public between the prime minister and lord lieutenant. Among these are lord Anglesey's popularity with the association, and his dining with a popular Irish nobleman, since created an English peer. These motives were but ostensible. It was a forced quarrel on the part of the duke. He had determined to emancipate the catholics, and chose to rid himself of one who would divide the honour with him. Lord Anglesey himself is

said to have seen instantly the true motive of his recall, and to have observed, in private conversation, "I know the duke: his mind is made up; and I am recalled because he would have no sharer in the victory."

At the commencement of 1829 there was a vague and faint anticipation on the subject of the catholic question, that something would be done. The catholics foreboded relief; their opponents, coercion. Parliament was opened by commission on the 5th of February, with a speech which contained the following momentous and decisive recommendation from the throne: —

"The state of Ireland has been the object of his majesty's continued solicitude. His majesty laments that in that part of the united kingdom an association should still exist, which is dangerous to the public peace, and inconsistent with the spirit of the constitution; which keeps alive discord and ill-will amongst his majesty's subjects; and which must, if permitted to continue, effectually obstruct every effort permanently to improve the condition of Ireland. His majesty confidently relies on the wisdom and on the support of his parliament; and his majesty feels assured that you will commit to him such powers as may enable his majesty to maintain his just authority. His majesty recommends that when this essential object shall have been accomplished, you should take into your deliberate consideration the whole condition of Ireland, and that you should review the laws which impose civil disabilities on his majesty's Roman Catholic subjects. You will consider whether the removal of those disabilities

can be effected consistently with the full and permanent security of our establishments in church and state, with the maintenance of the reformed religion established by law, and of the rights and privileges of the bishops and of the clergy of this realm, and of the churches committed to their charge."

The friends of liberty, and even the catholics themselves, were temperate in their triumph; but the exclusionists set no bounds to their rage and reproaches. They charged the duke of Wellington with perfidious and guilty concealment of his designs up to the last hour, and loaded Mr. Peel with imputations of faithlessness and apostacy.

The king's reluctance was deep-rooted and violent. The bare mention of the subject exasperated him. He was known to say, and only in his milder mood, — "I wish those catholics were damned or emancipated." The angered despotism of this alternative still afforded the hope that his intolerance might be overcome by his selfish love of ease. It cost the duke of Wellington many months of management, vigilance, and perseverance to obtain his assent. The duke's mind, then, during his supposed supineness, was intently directed to overcome the first and greatest obstacle in his way. It appears from a passage in his correspondence with lord Anglesea that the king's health or his temper was in such a state, that for some weeks the catholic question could not even be named to him. Monarchy, doubtless, has its advantages; but it is a matter of serious reflection that under a government called free, among a people called civilised, the claims of millions. and

the contingent horrors of a civil war, should be thus dependent upon the distempered humours and paramount will of a single unit of the species.

The protestants complained of treacherous desertion and surprise. Had the duke of Wellington disclosed his intentions sooner, the petitions of the people and individual counsel would, they said, have fortified and secured the opposition of the king. The duke vindicated himself by the fact of his not having finally obtained the king's sanction until near the last moment. But he was too able and too old a soldier not to know the advantages of masking his movements from the adversary in politics as well as in war. Mr. Peel subjected himself to execration and ribaldry from the party of which he was hitherto the chosen chief. He has since entered into frequent and circumstantial vindications of the course which he pursued: but his conduct, in reality, demanded eulogy, not defence. His character was cleared by the sacrifices which he made, and really exalted by his political fortitude and public motives. It will suffice to repeat from his own statement that, to preserve consistency of opinion, he had determined to resign; that the archbishop of Canterbury and bishop of London, having learned, in the mean time, the intentions of government, had an audience of the king with hostile views:—that if he resigned, the duke of Wellington would find it difficult to carry his intentions into effect; and, that judging the contemplated measure, under the circumstances, advisable, he thought it his duty to continue his support to the prime minister.

The considerations pressed by the duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel upon the king have not appeared; but it may be presumed that they were mainly those urged by them in parliament — the dangers to which the peace and integrity of the kingdom were exposed by the state of Ireland. A protestant petition in favour of emancipation, very numerously and still more respectably signed by noblemen and gentlemen of Ireland, was forwarded in January to the duke of Wellington, and was understood to have contributed greatly to his success in obtaining the king's approval. But so strong was the king's reluctance, and so powerful or insidious were the arts employed to indispose him to the measure, that even after the opening of parliament, when the government was pledged, and down to the afternoon of the 10th of February, when the ministerial plan was to be introduced in the house of commons, the duke of Wellington did not hold himself perfectly secure. It was said that to the last hour it was a matter of doubt with Mr. Peel whether he should proceed, until he received a pencilled note from the duke containing the words — "You may go on." The duke of Wellington had one great security, — an auxiliary which had already sustained him against the disinclination of the king, and the authority and persuasions of the prelates, — the king's horror of the fatigue, embarrassment, and great difficulty of constituting a new ministry, if the duke should, as he assuredly would, resign.

That spirit of the cloister at Oxford which had repelled Mr. Canning and adopted Mr. Peel, now

repudiated the latter. Mr. Peel, upon his change of conduct, placed his seat at the disposal of the university, — failed to obtain his re-election, — took his seat for Westbury; and, on the 10th of February, commenced by introducing a bill to suppress the catholic association. This bill passed with ease and speed through both houses; but before it reached its last stage had become superfluous. Upon the arrival in Dublin of the recommendation from the throne, at the opening of parliament, the association dissolved itself. The same packet which brought to Dublin the commissioners' speech, also brought letters from the best friends of the catholics in London recommending this course. Mr. Sheil proposed, in the most urgent terms, that the association should immediately declare itself dissolved. Mr. O'Connell wrote letters from England earnestly deprecating the dissolution; but his opinion was overruled, the proposition of Mr. Sheil was agreed to, and the association ceased to exist.

A call of the house of commons was ordered for the 5th of March. On that day Mr. Peel rose to move "a committee of the whole house to consider of the laws imposing civil disabilities on his majesty's Roman catholic subjects." The speech with which he introduced his motion was a clear, ample, and able exposition of the progress of the catholic question until at last it reduced the government to a choice of dangers, the lesser of which, in the opinion of an unanimous, united cabinet, was that of conceding. They could not, he said, stand still; they must re-enact or repeal. He next

stated the nature of the ministerial measure. It was, he said, concerted with no party. It was prepared and confined within the bosom of the cabinet. The abolition of civil distinctions, and the equality of civil rights, were assumed as its principle and basis. This declaration was profoundly felt, and received by the house with a burst of applause. It amounted to declaring that the measure would be simple, enlarged, and liberal, — not a pettifogging contract, rendered ungracious by suspicions, and trammelled by securities. A new oath was proposed to be taken by catholic members of parliament, of which the only material article was, that they would not employ their privileges against the protestant church or state: and catholics were to continue disqualified for the offices of lord lieutenant of Ireland and keeper of the great seal.

The whigs must, of course, have supported the measure; but they did so in a spirit of disinterested co-operation. It was but feebly opposed. One of its chief opponents was sir Robert Inglis, the successful competitor for the representation of Oxford with Mr. Peel. He distinguished himself by exaggerated high church notions of ecclesiastical polity and supremacy. After an adjourned debate, the motion was carried by a majority of 348 to 188. Resolutions proposed by Mr. Peel in the committee were immediately agreed to, and a bill founded on the resolutions was introduced by him, and read a first time on the 10th of March.

Mr. Peel, on the 17th of March, moved the second reading of the bill. The speeches on both sides were, for the most part, dull and trite to the

last degree of weariness, unless when relieved by personalities. Mr. Sadler, the representative of Newark and of the duke of Newcastle, in a maiden oration, opposed to the measure sound principles and humane views respecting the state of Ireland, ingeniously misapplied in argument. Lord Palmerston and sir George Murray should also be especially excepted. They supported the bill without originality of topics, but with the stirring animation of true eloquence. Sir Charles Wetherell, the attorney-general, had refused to draw the bill. Still in office, under warning, until a successor should be appointed, he hurled around him upon the measure, its framers and advocates, furious fragments of declamation and personality, some of which reached the lord chancellor in the other house, and drew from that high authority an opinion of the speech and the speaker, which, if pronounced by him in a different place, would be of very grave consequence. The bill was ultimately read a second time, by a majority of 353 to 180. After three days in committee it came out as it went in; and on the 30th of March was read a third time, and passed.

Mr. Peel next day, with an unusual escort of members, presented his bill at the bar of the house of lords: it was, in the course of the evening, read a first time unopposed. The second reading was moved by the duke of Wellington on the 2d of April. It is the property of a superior mind to rise with the occasion. The duke of Wellington's speech on this, the greatest parliamentary occasion of his life, was not only his best effort as a speaker, but combined facts, reasoning, and eloquence. One

passage, spoken by him in a tone of deep feeling, was heard with emotion. After going over the state of Ireland, and the extremities to which adverse factions there were likely to proceed, he said, "It has been my fortune, my lords, to have seen much of war — more than most men. I have been constantly engaged in the active duties of the military profession from boyhood until I have grown grey. My life has been passed in familiarity with scenes of death and human suffering. Circumstances have placed me in countries where the war was internal, between opposite parties of the same nation; and rather than a country I loved should be visited with the calamities which I have seen, — with the unutterable horrors of a civil war, — my lords, I would run any risk, — I would make any sacrifice, — I would freely lay down my life." The archbishop of Canterbury, more fortified against consequences than the veteran warrior, opposed the motion, and moved an amendment that the bill should be read a second time that day six months. The debate was continued by adjournment through four nights. Of the bishops the great body supported the amendment. Lloyd, bishop of Oxford, was the only marked exception. His position was curious and painful. He had to refute his own speech on the same subject in the preceding session; and his change of sides in the train of his ministerial patron subjected him to the reproaches of his party. The speeches against the bill were like so many epitaphs on the penal laws, and, like other epitaphs, consisted of hollow eulogies upon the good which the deceased had performed in their generation. The most laboured and lachrymose was that of lord Eldon.

On the 6th of April the bill was read a second time, by a majority of 217 to 112. On the 7th and 8th it passed intact through the committee; on the 10th it was read a third time and passed; on the 13th it received the royal assent, and became a monument of the adroit and energetic genius of the duke of Wellington.

The relief bill having passed, Mr. Peel brought in a bill to disfranchise the Irish forty shilling freeholders and raise the qualification to ten pounds. It was part of the general measure recommended from the throne, and passed with little opposition through both houses: even in Ireland it met no serious resistance. The association was no more; the peasantry were tired of the privilege; and the landlords willingly parted with instruments of jobbing and bribery which had recoiled upon themselves.

On the 13th of May, Mr. O'Connell presented himself to take his seat for Clare. The clerk produced the old oath, which the relief bill had repealed. Mr. O'Connell proposed to take that prescribed to catholics by the new act. The speaker informed him that he was returned before the passing of the act, and was therefore excluded in express terms from its operation. Mr. O'Connell was heard at the bar, and argued ingeniously and ably in support of his right; which, after a long discussion, was negatived by a majority of 190 to 116. He next day presented himself at the bar, was informed of the decision, and asked whether he was prepared to take the old oath. Having requested leave to look at the oath, and having examined it for a moment, he said, "I see in this oath an assertion of fact

which I know to be false, and an assertion of opinion which I believe to be false." The provision of the new bill which excluded Mr. O'Connell was expressly designed for his exclusion, and had been insisted on personally by the king. Mr. O'Connell went back to Ireland, and was re-elected without opposition for Clare.

The whole interest of the session was absorbed in this single measure. One curious effect of its success was, that it piqued some of the intolerant tories into reformers. The session was prorogued by commission on the 24th of June.

Sir Charles Wetherell was succeeded by Sir James Scarlett, who had been attorney-general under the administration of Mr. Canning; and Mr. Sugden was appointed solicitor-general in the room of sir N. Tindal, made chief justice of the common pleas. The most important official change was the retirement of the duke of Clarence from the admiralty, and the return of lord Melville as first lord. The administration of the duke of Clarence was popular; his official levees and evening hospitalities enlivened the admiralty; and his visits to the chief naval stations produced extraordinary animation in the fleet. The victory of Navarino shed its lustre upon the lord high admiral, and was rumoured to have been, in part, the result of his instructions to sir Edward Codrington.

The last session of the reign of George IV. was opened by commission, on the 4th of February, 1830. He did not live to witness its close, or the great political movements which render this a memorable year. The emperor of Russia had dictated hard

and humiliating terms to the Ottoman Porte, at Adrianople, on the preceding 14th of September; and the speech congratulated parliament on the restoration of peace in the East. Considerable progress had been made by diplomatic agency towards a pacification of Greece. The sultan, chastised by the Russians, submitted himself to the treaty of the 6th of July; and the allied parties to that treaty, in a conference held in London, on the day before the opening of parliament, signed a protocol, erecting Greece, within certain boundaries, into a new monarchical state, without yet deciding who should be its sovereign. The final arrangement of the affairs of Greece was accordingly announced, in the commissioners' speech, as nearly, not actually, completed. In Portugal, the prince who filled the throne continued to murder, pillage, and proscribe; and failed in the attempt, not the will, to assassinate his sister. Had Mr. Canning lived, this Portuguese *bœuf-tigre* would not have been sent back without the humane precaution of disarming his savage instincts. The duke of Wellington restored him on his parole; and lord Aberdeen thought it enough to consult the king's dignity by continuing the suspension of diplomatic relations with Portugal, and announcing the suspension in the commissioners' speech. In the part of the speech which was addressed to both houses, the king lamented briefly "that distress prevailed among the agricultural and manufacturing classes *in some parts* of the united kingdom." The hardihood of this attempt to slur over a notorious and distressing truth shook the ministry to its centre: it was met in both houses, and

throughout the country, with the indignant reply that distress was severe and universal. Lord Stanhope moved an amendment in the house of lords; which was vitiated by his notions on the currency question, and supported by a minority of only nine. In the house of commons, an amendment moved by sir Edward Knatchbull was negatived by 158 to 105. The catholic claims had produced a sort of approximation between the duke of Wellington and the whigs; they were unwilling to abandon him to the vengeance of the tories: otherwise his government must have been routed at the very opening of the campaign. Lord Blandford next day, upon the bringing up of the report, moved what he called "a wholesome admonition to the throne," by way of appendage to the address. The "wholesome admonition" was a vindictive effusion of defeated bigotry, under the name of parliamentary reform, and was repudiated by the true reformers.

Petitions, setting forth and detailing the severest state of privation and suffering, poured in from all parts of the country. A motion on the state of the nation in the house of commons, by Mr. Davenport, was negatived, after four nights' discussion, by a large majority, referable to the secret tendency of the author and advocates of the motion to bring back paper money, and the adherence of ministers to the more popular and steady medium of the precious metals. The government took steps to afford some relief: the public charges were reduced a million, and taxes were removed to the amount of three millions and a half.

The fate of Greece was the only topic of public

interest in the foreign policy of the country. The sovereignty of the new state, soon after the opening of parliament, was offered by the conference of ministers of the three powers to prince Leopold of Saxe-Cobourg, and accepted by him. Difficulties, however, arose: the Greeks were dissatisfied with the boundaries assigned to them; they were deprived of a frontier which was necessary, they said, to their military defence; and the Greeks of Crete and Samos, who had fought and bled for freedom, like the rest of their countrymen, were doomed to return under the yoke which they had thrown off. Prince Leopold was made acquainted with the discontents of the Greeks by the president Capo d'Istria, who played, with a perfect knowledge of the man, upon his habits of life,—his love of tranquil pleasures and elegant enjoyments,—by an overcharged picture of the hardships to be endured by the prince sovereign of Greece. After much negotiation with the ministers composing the conference, prince Leopold refused the proffered sovereignty. Destiny reserved for him a crown in another quarter, and almost without his seeking. There is something extraordinary in the caprice with which Fortune has forced upon the unambitious, quiet, perhaps common-place character of this prince, favours which are usually won with difficulty by the aspiring and adventurous.

Meanwhile the hand of death was upon the king. For the two last years he had almost wholly secluded himself at Windsor. The royal lodge, the fantastic structure at Virginia Water, the avenues in which he took exercise in a pony chaise between Virginia

Water and Frogmore, were screened by every artifice of surrounding surface and plantation to shut out the world. When he took an airing, sentinels were placed at the several accessible points, to keep off those who might intrude from accident or curiosity; or, where the way was public, to give notice, so that he might take another course. It was, perhaps, an injustice to ascribe his impatience of the common eye to those habitually pampered illusions of royalty which render it contemptuous of the multitude. His infirmities had been growing rapidly upon him. He had frequent attacks of gout; tendency to inflammation; oppressed breathing; and depression of spirits. The last alone would account for his aversion to the observation of strangers. His person had also reached a still more remarkable degree of corpulency, which was said to give him pain, less as an inconvenience than as a disfigurement. He felt it an affliction that he did not still resemble the pictures of his youth, or those portraits of his advanced life by sir Thomas Lawrence, in which flattery and fidelity are so magically blended. This was another motive for the weakness of shunning casual observation or curiosity.

His illness became serious at the beginning of the year, but was studiously concealed, and if mentioned in the newspapers, authoritatively denied. About the middle of April, however, his state was such that the court physicians were called in, and bulletins of his health were periodically made public. These announcements were vague and reserved, and passed, it was said, under his own eye. At one period he was declared convalescent, and the bul-

letins discontinued, by his authority over the physicians against their judgment; — such was the self-delusion with which he clung to life. But his disease was not merely dangerous, it was incurable, — an ossification of the heart. Seized with a fit of coughing, he burst a blood-vessel, and expired, leaning on an attendant, at three o'clock in the morning of the 26th of June.

In the events and achievements which give interest and lustre to his regency and reign, George IV. had personally no share. He was but contemporary with them. To the progress of science, of literature, of legislation, he was a stranger. The jealous limitations of the regal power, — the independence, enterprise, and social advancement of the nation, would account and afford excuse for this: but were he absolute as Louis XIV., — obeyed and imitated with the same implicit servility, — the higher purposes of intellectual being were beyond his range. With the fine arts his relations were more close and personal. The progress of architecture was sudden and astonishing, during the epoch which will bear his name. London, before his accession to the executive power, was a rich, populous, elegantly built capital, but without a due proportion of prominent structures characterised by architectural grandeur, beauty, or curiosity. In a few years magnificent lines and masses of building were begun and completed; but they were mainly the growth of wealth, vanity, speculation, and peace. Where his influence was directly felt it proved unfortunate. He lavished millions in creating vicious models, and fantastic styles of architecture, and brought into

fashion artists without capacity or taste. There was not in his kingdom a more discerning judge of painting; but he had no imagination for the higher class of art. He preferred the exquisite and humorous realities of the Dutch painters to the poetic or historic schools of Italy; and, though a studious collector, he gave no great impulse to native talent. In music he had both taste and skill: he encouraged an art which formed one of his enjoyments; and if his patronage has brought forth no composer of the first order, the cause may exist in some circumstances of national inaptitude.

It is necessary to go back some centuries for an English king to whom he bears the nearest likeness in *ensemble* of character. The parallel at first sight may be thought injurious, but the likeness will upon consideration be found striking and complete. George IV. had in his youth the éclat of personal endowment, education, and accomplishment, — of success in the fashionable exercises and graces of his age, — and of that reckless prodigality which obtains popular homage and applause in a prince. Henry VIII. in his youth was one of the most brilliant personages of Europe. A fine person, — the accomplishments of his time in literature and the arts, — the display of gorgeous prodigality, — raised him to a sort of chivalrous rivalry with Francis I. In mental culture he excelled George IV., who owes much of his reputation for capacity and acquirement to an imposing manner, and the eagerness to applaud a prince: stripped of this charm, his ideas and language appeared worse than common when he put them on paper. Both had the same dominant

ambition to be distinguished and imitated, as the arbiters of fashion in dress for the costliness, splendour, or novelty of their toilet. Henry VIII. and George IV. surrounded themselves with the men most distinguished for wit and talent, with a remarkable coincidence of motive, as ministering to their vanity or pleasures; but as soon as they became troublesome or useless, both cast them off with the same careless indifference. Henry VIII., it is true, sacrificed to his own caprices, or to court intrigue, the lives of those whom he had chosen for his social familiarity; — whilst George IV. merely turned off his so called friends, and thought of them no more. But such is the difference between barbarism and tyranny on the one side, and civilisation and freedom on the other: that which was death in the former, is but court disgrace in the latter. George IV. was not cruel — he had even a certain susceptibility; the spectacle of human suffering revolted him: but suffering to affect him must have been present to his sense. Was Henry VIII. gratuitously cruel? That does not appear. He took no pleasure for itself in shedding blood, and avoided being a witness of it. Had he been obliged to look on whilst Anne Boleyn and Sir Thomas More were bleeding, he probably would have spared them. He sacrificed them to his impulses from mere selfish indifference. With their wives and mistresses Henry VIII. and George IV. were governed by the same self-indulgent despotism — the same animal disgusts. Henry VIII. had six wives, and sent one to the scaffold as the prelude to his marriage with another. George IV. had only one

wife, but she suffered the persecutions of six; and if she escaped decapitation or divorce, it was from no failure of inclination or instruments. Henry VIII. was the tyrant of his people, and George IV. was not: yet is there even here a similitude. Both surrendered their understandings to their ministers, upon the condition of subserviency to their personal desires. What George would have been in the age of Henry it might be ungracious to suppose; but it may be asserted that Henry, had he been reserved for the close of the eighteenth century, would have a very different place in opinion and history as a king and as a man,—such are the beneficent, humanising influences of knowledge, civilisation, the spirit of religious tolerance, and laws mutually guarding and guarded by public liberty!

The remains of George IV. were deposited in the royal vault at Windsor, with the accustomed solemnities, in the evening of the 16th of July.

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